

Words fail
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30p
EVERY WEEKDAY

I cannot say why some were left and some were killed...there were soldiers doing what they wanted



Eyewitness Mark Ross tells how he saw his companions' bodies hacked to death with machetes

A SURVIVOR of the Ugandan forest kidnappings last night gave a graphic account of being forced to march for nine hours through the jungle and seeing the bodies of five of his companions who had been hacked to death with machetes.

Mark Ross, an American tour operator and pilot who flew his fellow survivors back to Kampala yesterday, was roused in the early hours of Monday by gunshots fired at his camp in the Bwindi National Park, known as the Impenetrable Forest, which is home to Uganda's mountain gorillas.

"It all happened very fast. There was not a lot of shooting; first one shot behind, then a brief flurry," he told a press conference at the American Embassy in Kampala. The rebel soldiers, armed with automatic weapons and grenades, came into the camp in groups of 15 to 20. Tourists from a nearby camp were also brought in. They were all questioned about their nationalities and occupations before their possessions were taken and they were marched off towards the Congolese border.

Mr Ross thought there were about 120 attackers in all, almost all of them armed, with a few left to carry supplies as the tourists were marched at speed over several ridges.

First one woman, then two others, were unable to keep up. The attackers said they would escort them to safety, but Mr Ross later came across the bodies of two of them.

"The women had been killed on the spot. It looked like one was raped prior to being killed," he said. He could



A survivor of the jungle massacre talking on a mobile phone in the courtyard of the British High Commission in Kampala yesterday. Photographs by Richard Poble

Messages on bodies tell of hate for the British

FROM ROBIN LODGE IN KAMPALA

HUTU rebels who bludgeoned and hacked to death eight tourists after kidnapping them from a gorilla safari camp attached notes to the bodies saying "Americans and British, we don't want you on our land. You support our enemy."

The attackers were specifically looking for Britons and Americans when they raided the Bwindi Park in Uganda, according to the manager of one of the five camps there.

Other survivors reported that tourists were separated according to nationality. The attackers demanded to know who had British or American passports and told the French being told to stand aside. One of the leaders then handed a note to Anne Pelletier, France's Deputy Ambassador to Uganda, saying the Interahamwe were not happy with Americans and British because they preferred to support the Tutsis against the Hutus.

Four Ugandans were killed at the camp and 14 English-speaking tourists were then marched into the jungle, where the eight met their deaths.

There had been suggestions that they had died in the crossfire during a Ugandan Army rescue attempt. But, although the Army set off in pursuit, witnesses insisted there had been no rescue and no gunshots.

"They were brutally murdered under gruesome circumstances," a State Department official said. And the official spokesman James Foley added: "There was no crossfire."

An American government plane was sent to retrieve the bodies yesterday: the survivors — two Britons, a Canadian, a Swiss, a New Zealander and the American Mark Ross — were flown back to Kampala by Mr Ross on Monday morning.

Mr Ross, a 43-year-old Nairobi-based tour operator from Arkansas, could not find his keys, so he started his plane with his knife. "I put on classical music to slow everyone down," he said. "The mood was very, very sombre and there were a lot of tears when we touched down."

In a statement to the Ugandan Parliament yesterday, the Government strongly condemned what it called a barbaric terrorist attack, which it blamed squarely on the Interahamwe, a Rwandan Hutu militia implicated in the 1994 genocide of more than a million Tutsis and Hutu moderates. The militia has been based in the Congo for the past five years.

For President Museveni, who has been trying to build up Uganda's image of stability for years in the wake of the horrors of the regime of Idi Amin, the attack comes as a bitter blow.

It also highlights the problems he has been having with his Congolese neighbour. Ugandan and Rwandan troops are fighting in the Congo in support of rebels trying to overthrow the government of President Laurent Kabila. Mr Kabila, for his part, has tolerated the presence of Ugandan and Rwandan insurgents who are fighting in support of his forces.

The attack will also hit the country's tourism hard. The Bwindi National Park, also known as the Impenetrable Forest, is visited by thousands of tourists every year, who are hoping to see some of the 320 surviving Ugandan mountain gorillas. The money that this tourism brings in is crucial to those gorillas' continued survival.

Tribute to a kind-hearted son who loved life

BY ADRIAN LEE

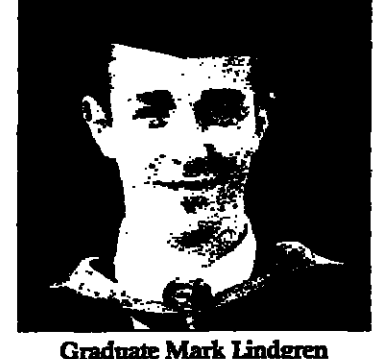
ONE of the Britons killed by the rebels was named last night as Mark Lindgren, a 23-year-old graduate. He was just more than two weeks into a three-month tour of Africa with London-based travel firm Acacia Expeditions when he was captured.

Mr Lindgren's girlfriend had hoped to join him on the trip of a lifetime when she had received her visa. His parents, Ann and John, paid tribute to their son, a life-long Wolver-

hampton Wanderers fan with a keen interest in wildlife. He had obtained three As and graduated in French and Management Studies from Nottingham University last year. He has a sister, Emma, 28, who is a teacher in Cornwall.

Mr Lindgren's father, a chartered surveyor, said: "Mark was kind-hearted, generous, bright and loved life. He had a wonderful sense of humour and was loyal to his friends and family. He was respected by the people he worked with and he had a bright future ahead of him."

Peter Kellner, a journalist and



Graduate Mark Lindgren

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MASSACRE IN THE JUNGLE



Interahamwe Hutu guerrillas in 1994, when they launched the swiftest genocide the world has seen

Hutus wage war in gorilla haven

SITTING across a few feet of matted leaves and looking into the quizzical, almost human eyes of a male, 20-stone silver-back mountain gorilla, one could not help but feel that this magnificent creature was wondering why these puny facsimiles of his own kind were so bent on butchering each other.

The 600 remaining mountain gorillas on the Virunga range — where eight tourists, including four Britons, and four safari park staff were murdered by Hutu militias — have in the last five years been trapped at the centre of man's inhumanity to man.

The jungle canopies and mountain ranges which have become their last redoubt against marauding poachers have provided ideal cover for Interahamwe killer squads bent on "finishing the job" of the genocide of the Tutsis in Rwanda.

They are punishing the Ugandans for supporting the Tutsis, and English-speaking tourists because of a belief that their loss to the Tutsis was

Backpackers drawn to mountain zone of genocidal gunmen, writes Sam Kiley, Africa Correspondent

part of an anglophone conspiracy to take over French-speaking Central Africa.

The Bwindi Impenetrable National Park is just as its name suggests. Thick tropical rainforest is broken only by animal paths where hundreds of Interahamwe fighters have set up bases to launch attacks on Tutsis in northwest Rwanda, southeast Uganda and the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

One would have to be suicidal to try to visit Congo's gorilla sanctuary just across the border from Bwindi, or the colony of gorillas in Rwanda, where the late Dian Fossey had her research centre made famous by the film *Gorillas In The Mist*, which starred Sigourney Weaver.

But until recently the Ugandan gorillas, numbering about 350, were considered a safe option for tourists spending thousands of pounds on the opportunity to see one of the world's great natural wonders in the wild.

Now, however, serious questions have to be asked as to why the area was considered

safe. It was the main route taken by Tutsi rebels who left the Ugandan Army to form the Rwandan Patriotic Front when they invaded Rwanda in 1990.

It now provides a haven for their Hutu enemies.

On my visit to the gorilla sanctuary in what was then called Zaire, the sounds of mortar explosions drifted through the jungle canopy along with the mist as the gorillas chewed wild celery in 1992.

Two years later the Interahamwe and Rwanda's Hutu leadership launched the swiftest genocide the world has ever seen, killing an average of 37,500 people a day — mostly with clubs and machetes. A million were dispatched.

When the RPF drove the Hutus from power they fled west, past the Ruhengeri area of west Rwanda where the gorillas live, into Goma, Zaire.

There, as the international community spent more than £15 million a day to feed, clothe and educate the Hutus, calls for the arrest of their lead-



An unidentified victim of the kidnapping is comforted in the grounds of the British High Commission in Kampala, the Ugandan capital, yesterday. Britain has now advised tourists not to visit the volatile border area

ers went unheeded. Instead, using profits from inflated refugee figures, money from mysterious French backers, arms from Paris and weapons supplied by British arms dealers, the Interahamwe continued to train its men and equip them for an invasion of Rwanda.

The effect on the environment of the hundreds of thousands of people camped around Goma for two years was catastrophic. The newcomers cut down thousands of acres of the gorillas' habitat to build homes and cook food.

Their leadership moved into coffee estates, ruined them, and set up command centres in the crumbling remains. In 1996 Rwanda, backed by

Uganda, Tanzania and Burundi, and with the approval of the US, decided to clear the camps of the Interahamwe.

Three quarters of a million refugees returned home. But the hardcore fled west, where many were murdered by Tutsi fighters, or into the surrounding mountains — where the gorillas now try to survive with the killers in their midst.

In Uganda, the Hutus have been able to ally themselves with rebels opposing President Museveni and to attack vehicles and convoys. Blending into the Hutu-populated countryside of Rwanda, they target the isolated Tutsi communities.

Rwanda and Uganda have increased security in their border areas because of the region's rich tourist potential. But their armies face an almost impossible task in combating a foe which can mount surprise attacks before melting back into the rainforest.

□ **Brazzaville:** A new rebel group in the Democratic Republic of Congo said it had captured the town of Bolobo, 215 miles north of Kinshasa on the Congo River. The Union of Republican Nationalists for Liberation said the town of 30,000, nominally controlled by President Kabila, fell without a shot being fired. (AP)

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'Wicked' act appals Blair

By MICHAEL BINYON
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR

TONY BLAIR yesterday described the kidnapping and killing of four Britons in Uganda as an act of wickedness "simply beyond belief".

Told of the tragedy during a visit to Italy, the Prime Minister issued a statement promising that the Government would do everything in its power to bring those responsible to justice.

Robin Cook, the Foreign Secretary, told a shocked House of Commons that it was still not clear how the victims died. He said: "The whole House will wish to join me in expressing our deepest sympathies to their relatives and families."

He said that every effort would be made to achieve the survivors' rapid and safe return.

As soon as news of the kidnappings reached Kampala, the British High Commissioner had insisted that Ugandan troops should not take any action that might endanger the hostages' lives.



A female mountain gorilla forages in Uganda. About 350 are believed to be living in the country, and until recently, their habitat had been considered safe for tourists

Foreign Office and holiday firms disagree over who is to blame

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY,
TRANSPORT
CORRESPONDENT

ROBIN COOK last night angered travel companies by demanding that they take greater responsibility in deciding whether to withdraw from troubled spots.

As tour operators yesterday cancelled or re-routed about 1,000 holidays to Uganda and neighbouring countries after receiving specific advice from the Foreign Office, the travel trade accused it of being too vague normally and not detailed enough.

The Foreign Secretary told the Commons that tour companies should not try to use Foreign Office advice as an indemnity against their own responsibilities. He said that firms should use "their own discretion and judgment and provide frank and clear warnings for those who travel with them".

As government officials warned tourists to avoid Uganda's gorilla region, Mr Cook's comments enraged a travel industry that has been increasingly critical of Foreign Office advice. Tour operators and travel agents accuse the Foreign Office of offering advice that is not related specifically to the area at greatest risk.

Two of the main companies involved in the region, Acacia Expeditions and Abercrombie and Kent, have about 500 tourists in Uganda, although very few were in the gorilla region. Strict limits are imposed on the number of passes for visiting the gorilla region and tour-

ists generally include the area as part of an African safari lasting up to eight weeks and costing up to £5,000.

Refunds are likely to be paid if holidays have to be cancelled.

"I think Mr Cook has a bit of a cheek," said Simon Bunce, legal adviser to the Association of British Travel Agents (Abta).

"Many tour operators have far more detailed information from their own representatives than is offered by the Foreign Office, who may only

and awarded them £1,400 in compensation.

Several leading operators were incensed last year when the Foreign Office advised against travel to Israel during airstrikes against Iraq. Holidays in the Red Sea resort of Eilat were cancelled for thousands of tourists, although the southern town was not considered to be at risk.

The travel industry has become increasingly concerned about the lack of resources, and Baroness Symons, the Foreign Office Minister, held a

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A holiday advert promoting adventure in Uganda

have someone based in the capital," Mr Bunce said that travel companies often had to follow Foreign Office advice even when it was known that areas of a country were not at risk. He added that one couple sued an operator successfully after they were brought home from the Comoros Islands in the Indian Ocean after an attempted coup.

Although the Foreign Office had advised them against travelling to the islands, a court found that the operator was wrong to withdraw the couple

meeting with senior industry figures last week.

She was told that the three full-time staff in the advisory department were insufficient to deal with the 1,000 advice notices put out by the Foreign Office last year.

Sue Ockwell, a spokeswoman for Acacia Expeditions, which had tourists on the Ugandan trip, called last night for the Foreign Office to communicate more closely with other governments before offering advice.

"We were amazed to hear

that Australia has been advising against travelling to the gorilla region for some time. I would have thought that there could be some communication between governments when they are sending tourists to the same area."

Some tour operators have called on the Foreign Office to grade countries according to the level of risk, although Abta fears that this could lead to information becoming even more vague.

Tour operators feel they must follow Foreign Office advice, believing that they would be liable if any tourist was injured but had not been warned of the dangers.

"But the advice must be clear," said Mr Bunce. "If it is unclear, then a client is likely to argue with the travel firm over the interpretation. That leads to problems that could be avoided by clearer advice."

The travel industry, while acknowledging the seriousness of the incident in Uganda, emphasised that it was an unusual occurrence, even for the most intrepid holidaymakers.

"We hope it won't put people off the idea of having an adventure holiday because the majority of them are safe," Keith Bettom of Abta told Sky television.

Uganda was doing its best to ensure that every part of the country was safe for tourists, Professor George Kirya, the Ugandan High Commissioner in London, said yesterday.

But he said that visitors would have to decide for themselves where they felt safe to travel.

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MASSACRE IN THE JUNGLE

How death invaded safari paradise

Daniel McGrory traces the chain of events that led to the killing of eight tourists in a carefully planned attack by Hutu rebels

THE ambush began before dawn on Monday when scores of Hutu rebels swarmed across the border into the Ugandan rainforest that had become a magnet for holiday-makers seeking adventure.

The raid was clearly carefully planned. One group of tribesmen moved swiftly to the village of Butogota, firing wildly in the air, in what was a diversionary attack.

The rest of the rebels surged through the jungle clearing towards three safari camps in the game park where most of the tourists were still sleeping. It took only minutes for the whole area to be overrun as up to 150 members of the notorious Interahamwe death squads descended on the fenced-off compound in the Bwindi National Park.

The camps are deliberately cordoned within a few hundred yards of each other for security and all sit close to the main lodge at the edge of the park. They range from one-man tents popular with teenage backpackers to wooden cabins set in the hillside, at the top of which sits a luxury dwelling known as the honeymoon tent.

Local rangers escorting the tour groups were easily brushed aside by the tribesmen, who shot at the startled guards with their semi-automatic AK47 rifles and hacked at them with machetes. The chief warden at Bwindi was shot dead with three of his rangers. Some of the rebels jabbed at the dying rangers with spears as the main force surged inside the swing gate at the Buhoma Camp entrance.

They tore through the administration building, where tourists register and collect their permits to track the gorillas through the early morning mists of the Virunga mountains. What the Hutu gang could not steal it burnt. Screaming at the tops of their voices, the rebels moved along the narrow track that cuts into the lush, green hillside.

Less than a hundred yards from the main gate is a clearing where overland tour parties pitch their tents. The groups of young backpackers camping there had travelled from Nairobi, through the Great Rift Valley and onto the source of the Nile before reaching what is still known locally as the Impenetrable Forest.

As the tourists were dragged from their tents, the rebels set light to their four-wheel-drive vehicles. The terrified trekkers

were forced to stand in a jungle clearing in whatever clothes they were wearing. Most were barefoot as the rebels menaced them with spears and machetes, demanding that they hand over their watches and any money.

While some of the tribesmen ransacked the tents and huts for valuables like cameras and binoculars, others pointed their AK47s at the holidaymakers, demanding to know their nationalities. In faltering French, they asked who was carrying British or American passports.

After being herded together in the camp known as Lake Tangira, they were pushed further along the track that sweeps up the hillside.

Scores of gunmen had already taken over the African Pearls Safari Homestead and were forcing more holidaymakers out of their cabins. One woman who was crying loudly was knocked to the ground, nearly unconscious, with a blow from the handle of a machete.

The same selection procedure was carried out with British and Americans being held aside from the rest.

One of those captured, Anne Pelier, France's Deputy Am-



Buhoma Camp in Uganda's Bwindi National Park, which is popular with Western tourists on gorilla tracking holidays, was one of the sites overrun by the Hutu rebels

the gang's leaders kept shouting that he was looking for what he described as "Anglo-Saxons". French tourists were told to stand to one side. The leader then handed Mme Pelier a message "to inform the world that the Interahamwe were not happy with Americans and British because they have preferred to support the Tutsi ethnic minority against the ethnic Hutu majority".

The gunmen then picked out 14 hostages and forced them out of the camp and out of sight of their fellow holidaymakers on barely marked tracks through the jungle. Their selection was as random as their attack. In this group were not only Britons and Americans but a Swiss, a Canadian and New Zealanders.

The 17 they left behind stood abandoned in the camp, crying and holding onto each other. They included two Americans who had managed to crawl out of their tents and hide in the undergrowth during the initial ambush.

Linda Adams, from California, had been caught by a group of gunmen who pushed her roughly in front of them, ordering her to move quicker. She managed to fake an asthma attack and collapsed in a heap, coughing and clutching her chest. The gunmen argued about what to do with her.

Some wanted to force her to continue with the march. Others argued she was slowing them down and should be left. By now the majority of rebels had moved on, hustling their

hostages to quicken their pace. Ms Adams said: "They were treating us as well as could be expected. We were sitting down under guns... not necessarily pointing at us, but they all had guns."

Those on the march had no idea where they were heading.

The climb was arduous and some hostages, who were barefoot, could barely stand.

There is a Ugandan Army base barely 12 miles from the tourist camps, and soldiers were trying to track the kidnappers through the dense jungle undergrowth.

After ten hours of the forced march, the rebels began arguing amongst themselves. Two grabbed hold of a Frenchwoman and were about to kill her when her daughter grabbed hold of them and pleaded for mercy. The rebels seem to relent and appeared to be taking

a group of women back down the mountain, in the direction they had come from.

Minutes later an area that was supposed to be safe for tourists became a killing ground.

Yesterday was not the first attack on tourists. Last August

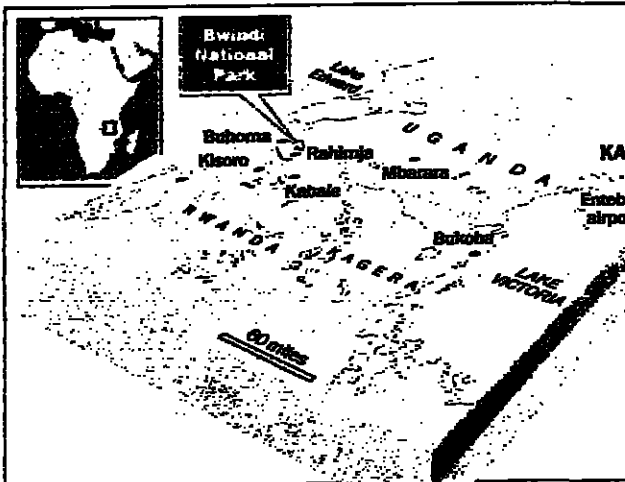
six holidaymakers who had crossed from Uganda into the Democratic Republic of Congo to track the gorillas were attacked and kidnapped by Rwandan Hutu rebels. Three are still missing, but Ugandan authorities believe that they are still alive.

'One of the gang's leaders kept shouting that he was looking for Anglo-Saxons'

bassador to Uganda, tried reasoning with one of the rebel leaders, pleading with him to release the women and children. While she tried to negotiate their freedom, gunmen charged the Gorilla Forest Camp, which is run by a local branch of the Abercrombie and Kent tour company.

Rebels ripped open the seven permanent tents, grabbing armfuls of looted belongings and forcing the occupants to join the rest of the bewildered and frightened band of international tourists. They fought with each other for the honour of reaching the highest tent — the honeymoon suite — and dragged out a young couple who clung to each other.

Survivors told how one of



150 Rwandan Hutu rebels raid three camp sites in the Bwindi National Park at dawn. In total, 33 tourists are kidnapped including six Britons, three Americans, three New Zealanders, a Canadian and an Australian. 17 tourists escape the kidnapping and return by US jet to Kampala.

Eight of the remaining hostages, four Britons, two New Zealanders and two Americans are killed by the Hutu rebels. Six are rescued by the Ugandan Army. Five hostages are found dead at the scene of the rescue attempt, the bodies of the other three are discovered nearby and taken to Entebbe airport.

Travel fears may harm frail Uganda economy

By ADAM SHEERWIN

UGANDA'S economy faces ruin if fears that the tourism industry will collapse prove correct. It has only been within the past few years that Uganda has capitalised upon its natural resources to build up the tourism trade, but confidence in the country as a viable destination has already begun to wane.

About 10,000 visitors arrive every year, boosting the fragile economy by about £5 million. Uganda has used rising tourism figures to encourage investment from Western nations. The Ugandan Government believes that investment is crucial if it is to combat the severe poverty across the nation.

The wildlife consultant Ian Redmond yesterday cancelled an expedition to the region by a group of British tourists this month. "It is very disappointing, but there is nothing else I could have done," he said. "It is an absolute tragedy that the militia activity in Rwanda has spilt over into Uganda."

Tourism revenues are used to protect the safety of dim-

ishing gorilla groups and conservationists now fear that the remaining 600 animals will be endangered.

Jillian Miller, director of the London-based Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund, said the murders could set the country's tourist industry back six years. She said: "All the wildlife authorities are doing their best, but there is a shortage of money. This kind of thing could place the gorillas in danger because it is tourist money that keeps the park going. Without it, heaven knows what might happen."

"Schools and clinics are actually funded through a percentage of the gorilla tourism receipts. So it is going to have a devastating effect on the communities immediately next to the parks."

She said that the conservation programmes were designed to ensure that local people were not forced to put gorillas under stress by looking for food and fuel in the game parks.

Uganda boasts other attractions for tourists. It has one of the biggest collections of birdlife in Africa, as well as the Mufumbiro volcanoes and the river Nile.

Although tourism has been an industry encouraged by President Museveni, agriculture remains the traditional backbone of the economy and employs about 80 per cent of the active population.

Government controls on the coffee and cotton industries have also been loosened and private exporters granted licences.



Museveni: encouraged gorilla tourism industry

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Howard finds eloquence no asset in the credibility game

WHAT is it about Michael Howard? Few of those who regularly write up the performances of the chief Opposition spokesman on foreign affairs do so without a faint sense of guilt.

We rarely praise him; we usually mock him: we draw attention to that "night creature" quality that Ann Widdecombe once described, that six o'clock shadow made flesh: time and again we say that he lacks credibility, detracts from whatever cause he espouses.

or scares the children. All this is fair comment: journalists have not invented the reactions he inspires.

And yet he's so damn good. Few can match the combination of energy, lucidity and intellect that Howard commands. There is no shortage of rent-a-quote Tory spokesmen who make a lot of noise, most of it incoherent; nor any shortage of more retiring people with better minds, like Peter Lilley. But for tireless persistence with a well-matched argument, Howard is

matchless. He just keeps pushing and he always makes his case.

Yesterday he was at it again, obviously with a bad cold, making a fine speech on the Foreign Affairs Select Committee's scathing report on the handling of the Sierra Leone affair. Howard's rhetoric had a sort of relentless logic. He was well-briefed, with facts and judgments at his fingertips. He was clear, he was poised and he was eloquent. He was probably right, for heaven's sake! But he will



MATTHEW PARRIS
POLITICAL SKETCH

hardly be credited in this morning's press.

Twenty-one years ago, the executive of the Conservative Association in West Derbyshire, a safe Conservative seat, was interviewing a shortlist of four for the position of prospective parliamentary candidate.

Among those four were

Michael Howard, who was then in his 30s, and your sketchwriter. I won. Since that contest three people have told me, on different occasions, that Howard made a better speech than I did — probably the best of all the candidates. Why, then, did he lose? The answer has always been the same: "He sounded too much

like a barrister." He was so fluent and smooth that his audience began to doubt whether he believed what he was saying.

I now wonder whether this is unfair. I do not know Mr Howard well, but my opinion is changing. I suspect (sometimes fear) that he really does believe what he says. He has rather stronger ideals in public life than most of his colleagues, though he can speak to a brief, like any minister. Friends say Howard is personally committed to a degree un-

common in politics) to some of the abiding causes in his Commons career.

Many novels and plays have dealt with the theme of inarticulate passion: men and women too uneducated to communicate the depth of their feelings: convinced of some great truth but incapable of arguing it through. And audiences love a rough-hewn diamond. The figure of the noble savage or dumb hero has always captured the popular imagination.

But is there, I wonder, an

even more tragic figure than the poor tongue-tied brute who cannot find words to express his conviction? Is it the over-educated, smooth-talking bastard who cannot help sounding like a smooth-talking bastard, even when he really means it? Is this not the ultimate tragedy — an awkward idealist trapped in the body of a svelte Welsh barrister, passion which, finding no fluent expression, is scorned as rhetoric?

And is that tragic figure Michael Howard?

Dome may run out of money, warns auditor

By Philip Webster, Political Editor

LABOUR MPs will today seek guarantees that the Government will not bail out the £753 million Millennium Dome after a report from the public spending watchdog raised "significant" doubts about its ability to pay its way.

In a paper described as "dynamite" by one MP, the Comptroller and Auditor General suggests that the Millennium Experience, the company responsible for the Dome, may need help from the Government or the Millennium Commission. Some £400 million is already coming from the National Lottery, leaving almost as much again to be found.

The company aims to raise £150 million in sponsorship and just under £200 million from ticket sales, merchandise and catering.

In a Commons motion to be tabled today, more than 30 Labour MPs demand a government statement — in the light of their "grave concern" about the Comptroller's findings — that "no further public funds" will be made available.

The Millennium Experience said last night the fears were misplaced and that it was completely confident there would be no need for taxpayers' money. There had been a "dramatic" change in the picture since the latest accounts of the Mil-

lennium Commission were published last September. The Comptroller's report was based on these.

The Comptroller, Sir John Bourn, completed his report in October but it was not placed in the Commons library until last month. Sir John makes plain that the company's own auditors, Ernst and Young, had drawn attention to inherent uncertainty about financial projections.

He says: "It is clear that there remains significant uncertainty as to the ultimate source and quantum for supplementary finance that may be necessary should income levels in particular not meas-

ure up to budget and forecast. "I observe from the [Millennium] commission's monitoring of the company's financial position that cashflow phasing might give rise to problems for the company and the commission in 1999. In order for the Millennium Experience to be completed it may therefore be necessary for the commission or Government to identify ways of assisting the company on this matter."

The commission would not be able to offer more lottery money to the Experience without parliamentary authority. However, it is prepared to allow it to have some £50 million to help with cash flow before the Dome opens.

Last night the Millennium Experience said that since the last commission accounts were prepared it had secured a further £58 million towards the target £150 million in sponsorship. With that figure up to £120 million, there were further offers of £15 million and negotiations under way about the remaining £15 million.

It added that the revenue targets had been based on the Dome attracting 12 million visitors but recent polls suggested at least two million more visitors. "We are committed to delivering this project without taxpayers' money."



The Duke of York meeting crew members of the frigate HMS Boxer, on a goodwill mission to Ho Chi Minh City, after arriving yesterday for a five-day official visit to Vietnam. Earlier he laid a wreath at the mausoleum of

Ho Chi Minh, leader of the north during the Vietnam war. He also had tea with the chairman of the city people's committee in the ornate splendour of the municipal hall, once the residence of French governors.

Officials expose art tax dodge

By Valerie Elliott, Whitehall Editor

OWNERS of national treasures are reneging on pledges to open them to the public in return for substantial tax benefits from the Government.

A National Audit Office survey has found that just 15 per cent of properties and artworks deemed to be "national heritage assets" are seen by members of the public each year, and that more than a quarter of the visits have taken more than two months to arrange.

People who own such properties are allowed to defer payment of any inheritance tax if they agree to conserve and

protect the property and to provide reasonable public access. But if an owner breaches his agreement with the Inland Revenue, sells the asset or decides to leave the scheme, tax must be paid.

Some £760 million in tax payments have been deferred under the scheme over the past 15 years, but some owners deliberately make it difficult for people to view their art or property.

In one case an Inland Revenue official spent six weeks to arrange a viewing of six portraits given as a gift to the nation in lieu of tax.

Lawrence informants relocated

SCOTLAND Yard has rehoused informants who helped police in the Stephen Lawrence case and were mistakenly identified by Sir William Macpherson in his report last week (Stewart Tendler writes).

Yard sources yesterday confirmed that a number of people who gave police information about the murder had been moved from Eltham, south London, to new addresses, and that others had been given police protection.

Many of the informants named in the report lived on an estate linked to the five men later accused of the murder.

Phone-tap rule lets IRA escape justice

IRA leaders are escaping justice because phone tap evidence is not allowed in court cases, the former legal adviser to M15 told MPs yesterday. David Bickford told the Home Affairs Select Committee that international terrorists and gangsters involved in organised crime were also avoiding justice because of the failure of governments to act together. Mr Bickford called for changes to the law, the amalgamation of M15 and M16 and the creation of an international court to deal with worldwide crime in an effort to curb organised crime, which he said was "out of control".

Sniper accusation

A man was named in Belfast Crown Court yesterday as the IRA sniper who shot Lance Bombardier Stephen Restorick, the last British soldier killed in Northern Ireland. Bernard McGinn, 41, on trial for the murder, allegedly told police he was the back-up man and one of his co-accused, Michael Caraher, 31, was the gunman. Judgment was reserved.

Lorries to get priority

Lorries are to be given priority over cars on some urban roads, dual carriageways and motorways. John Reid, the Transport Minister, announced. The lorry lanes are among a range of measures to reduce the £15 billion cost to business of traffic jams and make the eventual introduction of motorway and road tolls more palatable to transport operators.

Murderer on the run

A convicted killer who stole silverware from the home of Baroness Thatcher when she was Prime Minister was on the run last night after walking out of Ford Open Prison in West Sussex. Thomas Tangney, 49, described by police as extremely violent, was jailed for life in 1980 for shooting dead a 61-year-old woman during a raid on her home.

Solicitors sue society

Solicitors are to take the Law Society to court after its governing body ruled that they cannot obtain their negligence insurance cover on the open market. The society's council voted by 32 to 29 in favour of keeping the compulsory mutual fund that sets insurance rates for all solicitors, despite a huge rise in premiums because of negligence claims.

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مكتبة الأهل

'Nazis almost killed me with the Jews'

A WOMAN of 73 told the Old Bailey yesterday how she fell to her knees and begged the boots of a German soldier as she pleaded for her life because she had been mistaken for a Jew.

Woman tells trial that she begged for her life as accused stood by and did nothing. Tim Jones reports

As she begged to be spared, Anthony Sawoniuk, the man accused of helping to carry out Nazi genocide, did nothing to help although he knew her well.

Sedora Yakimuk, 73, told Britain's first war crimes trial that she was a girl of 16 when 2,900 Jews were massacred in the village of Domachevo in Belarus. Her family lived there and owned a cow and a horse. She said that while she was reaping wheat in a field she had injured her arm with a sickle and her mother bandaged the wound with a rag after treating it with iodine.

The iodine had seeped through the bandage leaving a yellow stain which was similar to the colour of the patches the Jews were forced to wear. Days after the main massacre, she said, she was walking down a road when she encountered Mr Sawoniuk, who was accompanied by a German soldier.

"They saw me and started shouting 'Jew, Jew' to make me stop. They got hold of me and started dragging me away to be shot. I was crying and fell to my knees and kissing the feet of the German, telling them I was not a Jew."

She added: "I was on my knees explaining I was not a Jew and pleading for my life. Although Andruska [Mr Sawoniuk] knew me well, he did nothing to protect me."

Mrs Yakimuk, who said Mr Sawoniuk's wife was godmother to the child of her older sister, said that when the German pulled off the bandage and saw what had happened he let her go.

she had never seen people being beaten or shot. Mrs Yakimuk, who has lived all of her life in the area, said that before the Nazi invasion in 1941 there had been no anti-Semitic tension in the community.

Local peasants, she said, used to travel to Domachevo to exchange dairy produce for white flour, pickled fish and sweets. She said: "Before the war, the relationship between us was excellent."

Another witness, Galina Puchkina, 68, said that on the day of the main massacre in the town, which occurred in 1942 during Yom Kippur, she attended as a girl of 11 a service at the Roman Catholic Church with her younger sister.

She said that during the service a German officer and an interpreter entered the church and ordered the congregation outside. There they were forced to witness groups of Jews from the ghetto being herded together and ordered to strip. "They had yellow badges sewn onto the front and back of their clothes. They were of all ages, from the very old to young children."

"I could see people crying. They were all being taken to their death by the local police and the gendarmes. They were all ordered to undress and were all naked."

Mrs Puchkina said that after the Jews had been marched out of her sight towards the forest, she heard the sound of machinegun fire and never saw them again.

Later, she alleged, at a time when Mr Sawoniuk had become the commander of the local police force, she and her family fled to the forest after being told they could be shot because of their suspected support for partisans.

Mr Sawoniuk, 77, a former British Rail ticket inspector of Bermondsey, South London, denies four charges of murder. The trial continues.



Sedora Yakimuk Bailey yesterday: she told the court that Mr Sawoniuk saw German soldiers dragging her away to be shot

IN BRIEF

Up rule lets rape justice

Justice Secretary Jack Straw has announced that the Government will introduce a new rule to allow rape victims to sue their attackers for damages.

Accusation

The Government has announced that it will introduce a new rule to allow rape victims to sue their attackers for damages.

get priority

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on the run

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sue society

The Government has announced that it will introduce a new rule to allow rape victims to sue their attackers for damages.

Boy of 8 'lured to his death by bus driver'

By PAUL WILKINSON

A BOY of eight was "befriended, groomed and seduced" before being murdered by a bus driver who had picked him up on his regular route, a jury heard yesterday.

The driver, Darren Vickers, gave Jamie Lavis special treats during the journey, allowing him to sit in the driver's seat and change the destination boards.

After the boy's disappearance in May 1997, Vickers, 28, gained the confidence of the child's parents, apparently becoming so engrossed in helping them that he was sacked for missing work. Manchester Crown Court was told.

Jamie's body was found five months later, dismembered and hidden with some of his clothing in a wood near a golf course. Vickers, from Ashton-under-Lyne, Manchester, denies abducting and murdering him.

Brian Leveson QC, for the prosecution, told the court that Jamie had spent the day of his death, a bank holiday, on Vickers' bus. "The Crown alleges that Jamie was befriended, groomed and effectively seduced by Darren Vickers who, at the end of his shift, took him off in his motor car and at some place murdered him," he said.

Mr Leveson said that the boy had been allowed to change gears, give out tickets, open the doors and count cash. Security videos at the Ashton bus garage recorded him five times during the day.

After the boy's disappearance, Mr Leveson said, Vickers "ingratiated himself on Jamie's family and became a vigorous media campaigner in the search for Jamie, such that they became his most energetic supporters when the police investigation focused on him".

He said that Vickers, who used a radio scanner to monitor the police search for Jamie



Darren Vickers, above, was obsessed with the search for Jamie Lavis



and arrive at the scenes of reported sightings before police, had confessed his involvement in the boy's death to a friend, and then to another prisoner after his arrest.

Vickers later told police that Jamie's death was accidental. He said that he had lashed out at the boy when he grabbed some of the ticket money, causing him to fall backwards and hit his head on a luggage rack.

But Mr Leveson said: "The Crown do not accept for one moment that what he said about how Jamie came to die is the truth... Certain it is that the body was dismembered by someone because experts on wildlife provide evidence that animals were not responsible for the extensive loss of bones."

The trial continues.

Couple jailed for torturing child

By SIMON DE BRUILLIES, WEST OF ENGLAND CORRESPONDENT

A MAN and a woman were jailed yesterday for imprisoning and torturing a boy aged 12. They had inflicted more than 130 injuries on him.

At Bournemouth Crown Court, Judge Patrick Hooten jailed the man for seven years and the woman for three. Children's charities later criticised the sentences as very lenient.

A social worker had visited a house in Poole, Dorset, looking for the boy, who had not attended school. Told he was ill, the officer went away without seeing him. An independent child care agency is to review the background to the case.

The man, who has previous convictions, admitted actual bodily harm; the woman admitted three similar charges. Both admitted cruelty and false imprisonment between last March 11 and April 27.

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Don't die of embarrassment, cancer experts say

TWO pilot schemes for a pioneering screening programme for bowel cancer that could save thousands of lives a year were approved yesterday. The aim is to overcome the embarrassment that prevents many people from seeking medical help for the condition until it is too late.

Bowel or colorectal cancer kills 20,000 men and women a year in Britain, making it second only to lung cancer as the most common form of the disease; yet most could be saved if they had an early diagnosis.

A simple test at home could cut the toll from bowel disease, reports Ian Murray

More than 30,000 cases of colorectal cancer are diagnosed every year and 93 per cent of deaths occur in people aged over 55. The former England football captain Bobby Moore and the actress Audrey Hepburn were among the victims of the disease.

The pilot schemes will cover 400,000 people in Coventry, Warwickshire, and Tayside, Grampian

and Fife during the next two years. The £5 million programme will be the first of its kind in Europe when it starts in the autumn.

Everyone aged between 50 and 69 living in the pilot areas will be sent a simple kit that will enable them to take a faecal sample in the privacy of their home. The sample is then sent to a laboratory for testing and those with a trace of blood will be re-

called for further tests to find out if pre-cancerous cells are responsible.

The Health Department hopes that at least 60 per cent of those sent the sample kit will take the trouble to send it back. There will be a two-year evaluation programme to see if screening does cut the death rate from the disease. If it proves successful, the programme will be extended to the rest of the country. Announc-

ing the programme, Tessa Jowell, the Health Minister, said: "Many of the 20,000 who die could have been saved if their cancer had been found earlier but many suffer in silence, too embarrassed to tell their partners or even their doctors. But, if it is caught early, colorectal cancer is one of the most curable of all cancers."

The Cancer Research Campaign

welcomed the programme but said it was worried that too many people would still be too embarrassed to participate. "For too long the British public has quite literally been dying of embarrassment and we strongly urge people to back the screening project and help to put an end to this needless waste of life," Gordon McVie, director general of the campaign, said. "We believe that with early detection and treatment most of the people who die each year from the disease could be saved."

Sunbed clients may be paying with their lives

By Ian Murray, Medical Correspondent

SUNBEDS can kill, the Health Education Authority declared yesterday. With up to three million people using them every year, the authority says that sunbeds could be responsible for a very high incidence of the most dangerous form of skin cancer.

The authority have begun a poster campaign showing the scars left by surgery to remove cancers caused by sunbathing. Although it conducts a similar campaign each year, it is worried that the message of the dangers of sunbathing are too often disregarded. Local authorities are being asked to phase out sunbeds from leisure and health centres as part of a skin cancer prevention policy.

"We know that young men and women are aware of the dangers of the sun but still regard a tan as attractive," Christopher New, the campaign manager, said. Those aged 16 to 24 are keenest on getting bronzed and 15 per cent of them, about 800,000, have at least one sunbed session a year.

Even though 40,000 people are found to have the disease

every year and the rates double every decade, the authority says that people are often unaware of the dangers or ignore the warnings. Many of those who do know that too much sunshine is dangerous do not realise that sunbeds are just as bad.

Ultraviolet radiation emitted by sunbeds is similar to that from the sun, which is responsible for most skin cancer. Half an hour on a sunbed can expose you to as much radiation as a day on the beach, according to the Imperial Cancer Research Fund.

Apart from the risk of cancer, sunbed tanning can cause burning, skin dryness and itching, a bumpy rash and eye irritation or conjunctivitis.

Beverley Dodds from Liverpool, a former model who used to help to sell sunbeds, says that she developed Bowen's disease, flat, scaly skin on the hands and face that can become cancerous. She is certain that she developed the illness as a result of overusing a sunbed.

Apart from cancer, other long-term effects of too much sunning include premature

ageing of the skin, blistering and cataracts. The greater the exposure, the greater the risk.

John Hawk, consultant dermatologist at St Thomas' Hospital, London, said this was building up trouble for the future. "Skin cancers can take 20 years to develop and the sunbed industry is still relatively young," he said. "There are already cases of early skin cancer in people who have frequently used sunbeds and my concern is that in the next few years we will see a substantial increase in skin cancers and ageing in people who regularly use them."

The Sunbed Association said that using a sunbed sensibly in a controlled environment was a more responsible approach to getting a suntan than overexposure to sunlight.

A statement said that all 700 operators and their members of the association worked to a strict code of practice. This required health checks and a skin analysis, and the number of sessions recorded and monitored for each customer. All manufacturer members had to ensure that their sunbeds met European standards.



Ian Botham ready for another walk to help leukaemia sufferers like Callum Williams

Botham to hit the road again

IAN BOTHAM is to walk the length of Britain again this autumn in aid of leukaemia research.

The former England cricketer will start his 886-mile trek from John o'Groats to Land's End on October 14, hoping to finish in 34 days. It will be his eighth epic walk for the cause, adding to the £3.3 million he has raised for the Leukaemia Research Fund.

He said yesterday that, because of logistical difficulties, this big walk would be his last, although he would continue raising funds for leukaemia research. "It's becoming very hard to put together — there are problems with the volume of traffic. Local authorities and police have been very helpful in the previous walks, you can only ask for that help and generosity so many times," Botham said. "My interest in leukaemia research will carry on until leukaemia is beaten — then I will move on to something else."

In 1985, Botham raised £1.1 million for the fund by walking the length of Britain. Since then, he has undertaken six similar hikes — including his celebrated retracing of Hannibal's route over the Alps in 1988.

Yesterday Debbie Donison, of South London, whose nine-year-old son Callum has leukaemia, said: "I think Ian's brilliant. He's done so much for leukaemia research."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Oyston in rape claim settlement

Owen Oyston, the businessman jailed for rape, has reached an out-of-court settlement with the former model he was convicted of attacking.

He agreed terms with the 23-year-old woman after more than 24 hours of legal negotiations at the High Court in Birmingham. The woman, whose name cannot be published, had brought a claim for damages, alleging that she had been left with permanent psychological damage after the attack seven years ago.

Oyston, 65, is owner of Blackpool Football Club and is believed to be worth about £40 million. He was jailed for six years in 1996 by Liverpool Crown Court. The settlement, approved by Mr Justice Smedley, meant that Oyston's victim, who was 16 at the time of the attack, was spared having to relive the ordeal in giving evidence.

Suspects freed

Irish police freed two men questioned about the Real IRA bombing in Omagh that killed 29 people. A man and a woman remain under arrest. Another man has been charged with conspiracy and belonging to an illegal organisation.

Lecturers' deal

College lecturers and the Association of Colleges announced a deal to end a six-year dispute over pay and conditions. Both sides reaffirmed their commitment to national pay bargaining and agreed to talks on a range of issues.

Making a point

Plans for a 400ft millennium spire in the centre of Dublin have been approved despite strong public opposition. The illuminated monument will be built in O'Connell Street on the site of Nelson's Pillar, which was blown up in 1966.

Hunger strike bill

Barry Horne, the animal rights campaigner jailed for string of arson attacks, ran up a bill of £11,000 for hospital treatment during his hunger strike last year. The York NHS Trust wants the Home Office to pay most of the cost.

Bainbridge win

Beryl Bainbridge has won the £10,000 W.H. Smith Literary Award for *Master Georgie*, set in the Crimean War. John Carey, chairman of the judges, said: "Haunting, poetic, funny and nightmarish, it catches the madness of war."

Titanic search

A stained glass window made as a tribute to Frederick Humber, a former Barnardo's boy who died on the *Titanic* after helping passengers into the lifeboats, is being sought by the charity. It was in storage in 1969 but is now missing.

Flying visits

Record numbers of North American birds are wintering in Britain because of global warming. Fifteen varieties have been sighted including the green-winged teal, black-bellied grebe and American herring gull.

District nurses struggle with growing workload

By Our Medical Correspondent

THE district nurse, a familiar figure of British life regarded with affection and humour, is a threatened species. A report out today describes an ageing and dwindling profession struggling with an increasing workload.

More than a quarter of the 13,500 qualified nurses are over 50 and half intend to retire before they reach 60, says the Audit Commission. Their average age is 45, compared with 39 for the nursing profession as a whole.

The public spending watchdog reports that the number entering training has shrunk by a third since 1990. At the same time, the ageing population means there is a growing call for nursing services in the home.

About 2.75 million people re-

ceive this kind of care, an 8 per cent increase since 1991. Nearly two thirds are over 65 and a quarter are between 75 and 84.

The report finds that district nurses have little control over their caseloads and "manage their workloads by juggling, sometimes on a daily basis, the frequency or duration of their visits and discharge decisions. This method of management does not promote safe and effective practice."

Caseloads vary widely. Some district nurses have only 20 patients to look after, others have up to 40.

Although only 1 per cent of patients are highly dependent on home nursing, they need a great deal of time. Two thirds of the group has to be seen at least once a day and a further 20 per cent at least three times

a week. The workload is made worse by the fact that one case in ten referred for treatment by GPs is inappropriate, costing the average trust £22,000 a year — enough to pay the annual salary of a senior nurse.

Out-of-hours care is patchy round the country, with a third of trusts providing no back-up after 5.30pm and only a quarter having staff on call round the clock.

"As a result, patients in some places are admitted to residential or nursing homes and even to hospital for care that could be, and in some places is, provided in the home."

The report advocates better partnership between health-care and social services and doing more to match the numbers and skills of nurses to the needs of patients.

Britten's estate joins row over concert fees

By DALYA ALBERGE, Arts Correspondent

THE estate of Benjamin Britten is threatening to stop future licences to the Oxford University Press to publish the music of the great British composer.

Donald Mitchell, chairman of the estate and the only surviving member of Britten's original executors, expressed outrage at a decision by the Performing Rights Society board, under the chairmanship of OUP's music director, Andrew Potter, to cut the income derived by composers and publishers from live performances.

Dr Mitchell, who was chairman of the society in the early 1980s, said: "We have to think extremely carefully about whether we'd wish to continue publishing with Oxford University Press in these curious circumstances."

How, he asked, was it possible for someone who was a music publisher to have made such a decision, one that would take a drastic toll on composers? "It would be mor-



Britten: publisher may lose licence for his music

ally impossible for us to continue with a publishing house that is not protecting its composers or estates or interests."

The decision of the society to scrap a scheme set up in 1992 to supplement live performances of classical music to increase the distributions to the copyright holders has upset the musical world.

John Sweeney, for the society, said that the classical music subsidy had "failed to apply support where it was needed or most valuable."

Kissing game chased out as a health risk

By JOHN O'LEARY, Education Editor

FIVE-YEAR-OLDS have been banned from playing kiss chase in the school playground because their head teacher fears that the "exchange of body fluids" could be a health risk.

The game went too far for Maureen Fitzgerald, head of Cheynes Infant School at Luton, Bedfordshire, when some children started putting their tongues into other pupils' mouths. She told parents in a letter that the school could not condone such "inappropriate behaviour."

Education officials backed Mrs Fitzgerald yesterday, arguing that unwanted physical attention could cause distress. But Iona Opie, the chronicler of children's games, said the action was the latest in a series of "hysterical reactions" to innocent playground games.

Mrs Opie said that even marbles had been banned in some schools recently, adding: "It is just another hysterical reaction to games that have been played safely for generations." Kiss chase dates from the Vic-

torian era, when it spread to schools from a more adult version played in Scottish farmyards.

Luton's "French kiss chase", played by children aged between four and seven, may owe more to copying clutches on television.

Parents outside the school supported the head teacher. Lynn Doyle said: "I think it was a small number of children involved but once one tried to put a tongue inside a mouth it could quickly spread."

We are all concerned about meningitis and it was quite right for her to put a stop to kissing like that." Another parent said: "If my seven-year-old child came home and said a boy had his tongue in her mouth I would be the first to be at the school complaining."

Luton Education Authority said it was not unusual for heads to ban the game. "Many other schools nationwide have found that children have responded favourably to the banning of games that involve unwanted physical attention."

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Invading protesters dug up the lawn

BY SIMON DE BRUXELLES

PROTESTERS wearing combat gear and balaclavas terrified a quarry manager's children when they invaded his garden in vans and cars.

Ian Wardle's children fled in terror when, on Sunday afternoon, the dozen environmental protesters descended to dig up the lawn and steal a mower as part of their campaign to save a wildflower meadow. The activists, carrying shovels and spades, were retaliating for the meadow, near Bristol, being moved by the firm Pioneer Aggregates.

They arrived at Mr Wardle's house in Chipstow, Monmouthshire, in a convoy and drove on to the lawns where he and his wife were playing with their three children.

As the children fled, the protesters began digging up the lawn, loading the vans with turf. Mr Wardle said yesterday: "The protesters claim to be non-violent but they left my three small children terrified."

Gwent police said that they were investigating what was a criminal offence.

Islanders take Britain to court over eviction

BY MICHAEL HORSNELL

ISLANDERS from the Indian Ocean accused Britain yesterday of illegally sending them into poverty-stricken exile in order to turn their home over to American forces.

The High Court in London was told that in the Sixties 3,000 people were evicted from the Chagos archipelago, of which Diego Garcia is the principal island, and dumped 1,200 miles away in Mauritius.

In a case affecting all those who had been dispossessed, Louis Bancourt, 51, chairman of the Chagos Refugees Group in Mauritius, wants to challenge the ban on his return home. The result of his application for judicial review will be announced by Mr Justice Scott Baker today.

Sydney Kentridge, QC, said

that the rights of islanders, known as the Ilois, who have the status of British Dependent Territory Citizens, were still being violated. Diego Garcia, now the site of air and naval bases and a strategic communications facility, was the subject of a treaty between America and Britain in 1966, during the Cold War.

Mr Kentridge told the court that between 1966 and 1973 residents were removed from the Chagos, part of the British Indian Ocean Territory, and prevented from returning. Many families had lived for up to five generations in the islands.

In 1967 Mr Bancourt, who was born on the island of Peros Banhos, visited Mauritius so that his sister could receive medical treatment. When the family tried to return home,

they were told by the authorities that ships had stopped going there.

The evicted families were deprived of their livelihoods of farming, fishing and plantation work and left to fend for themselves in Mauritius without housing or social security. They suffered from destitution and malnutrition. "No provision was made by the UK Government to enable the Ilois to settle in Mauritius," Mr Kentridge said.

The islanders had "a right of birth and citizenship" to return and an Immigration Ordinance of 1971 making an official permit necessary to visit the Chagos was unlawful, he said. Mr Bancourt, who is not attending the hearing, is receiving legal aid.

The application for leave to



The island of Diego Garcia, handed over for US military bases and strategic defence

seek judicial review is contested by the Government, which says that the High Court has no jurisdiction to consider the challenge.

Richard Gifford, Mr Bancourt's solicitor, said outside the court that suicide and depression are commonplace among the dispossessed islanders. "The main aim is for these people to go home," he said.

"The integration experiment in Mauritius has not worked."

Chagos means "wounds of Christ", a name given by early Portuguese seafarers. The islands were uninhabited before the French settled in 1776 as fishermen and coconut farmers and set up a leper colony. With the defeat of Napoleon in 1815, the islanders came under British colonial rule and

were joined by migrants from Africa and India, developing a Creole dialect. They became a matriarchal society because male lepers were more vulnerable to early death.

The population grew to 1,800. One of the few Western visitors, the Fifties journalist James Cameron, called it a "beauty spot of unrivalled tranquillity and beauty".

Adams hits RUC plans to box in New York

BY MARTIN FLETCHER

A CHARITY boxing tournament featuring the Royal Ulster Constabulary in New York faced cancellation last night following pressure from Gerry Adams and Sinn Féin supporters in America.

The March 19 tournament is supposed to raise money for a New York police officer seriously injured on duty, but Manhattan's state-operated Jacob Javits Convention Centre has now told the organisers it can no longer stage the event because it needs to prepare for a car show.

The centre's announcement came after Mr Adams sent letters to the state governor, New York's mayor and other top officials saying the invitation to the RUC amounted to "an endorsement of the discredited force".

The RUC said it was "sad that some people seek to turn what is simply a charity event into some sort of political point-scoring exercise".

This was the first time the New York Police Department had invited the RUC to join its annual tournament.

IS PICKING A WINNING PEP POT LUCK?

New research can help you reduce the odds.

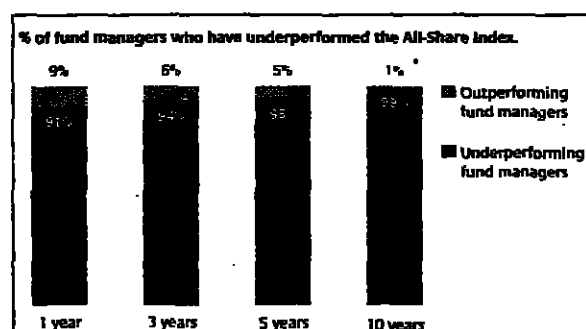
Trawling through the financial pages for your last PEP is a bit like entering a crowded bazaar with store holders shouting at you from all angles. Who do you buy from? The one who shouts the loudest or the one that 'promises' you the best deal?

Ideally, before making such a decision you'll want the added confidence and reassurance that can only come from a truly impartial and credible source. That's why we asked The WM Company, one of the world's leading investment performance consultants, to shine an independent light on the key issues.

If you can spare five minutes to read their findings, we promise it will make the task of choosing your last PEP considerably easier. We start with the remarkable fact that has led to one of the biggest debates ever in the investment industry, and which triggered the research...

THE INDUSTRY'S BEST KEPT SECRET

Before we entered the PEP market, we looked at the hundreds of PEPs on offer and discovered that less than one in ten actively managed funds outperformed the FT-SE Actuaries' All-Share Index of the top 828 UK companies - the industry benchmark for performance.



Source: Standard & Poor's Mifcapal, UK growth and income sector, to 31 December 1998. Buying to selling unit prices, net income reinvested.

'Tracker' funds, which simply track their chosen index by investing in all the companies that make it up, are not new. But before Virgin's high profile launch four years ago, trackers accounted for only a tiny part of the UK investment market. Why, you might ask? Especially as the chances of finding an 'actively' managed fund, where the manager succeeds in outperforming the index by 'carefully' choosing shares, seems so remote.

A TRULY OBJECTIVE VIEW

It's this issue that we asked WM to consider. After all, the first decision you need to make when choosing your PEP is whether to go for a tracker fund or to try to find an active fund manager who can beat it.

WM studied the performance of funds in the UK Growth & Income sector over 20 years to the end of 1998. These funds can be directly



compared with the FT-SE All-Share Index.

They found that in any five year period, active funds had around a one in four chance of outperforming a tracker. Over longer periods, they fared even worse.

These figures take into account annual management charges but not the initial charges levied by active funds. Allowing for all charges reduces the odds still further and it's easy to see why.

The average actively managed PEP has total charges over a five year period of 11.5% (source: Best PEP). Compare this with a typical tracker fund with no initial charge and a 1% annual management charge (just 5% over five years) and it becomes clear what a tough job an active manager has on his hands. He needs to outperform the market by 6.5% just to keep pace with a tracker!

BUT ARE ACTIVE FUNDS A GAMBLE WORTH TAKING?

It would seem not. WM found, not surprisingly, that to give them a chance of outperforming trackers, active funds took on more risk. This resulted in wild fluctuations in performance which were not generally associated with higher returns. In WM's own words "active investors were not being rewarded for the extra risk."

THERE'S WORSE NEWS TO COME

Even so, many PEP investors are still willing to try and upset the odds by finding that elusive outperforming fund manager. And the generally accepted way of choosing is to look at a fund's past performance.

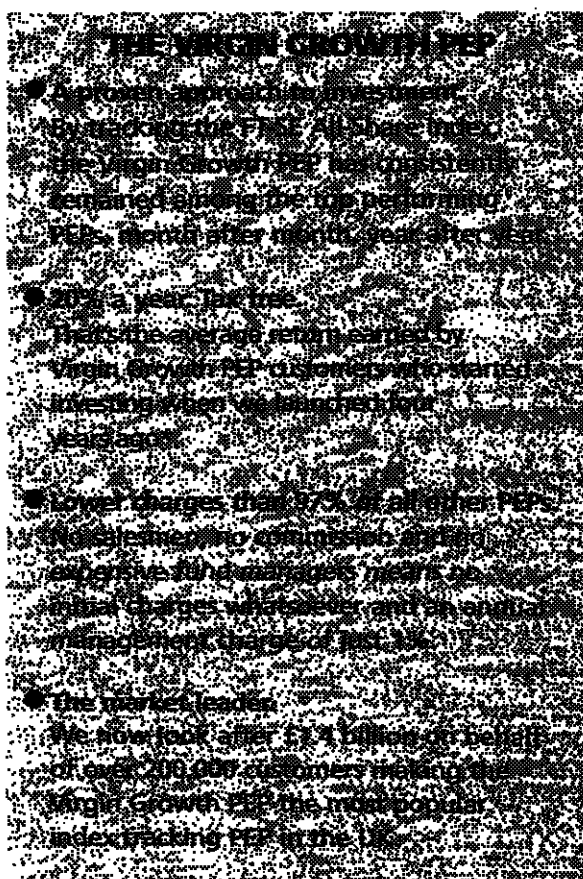
However, this is the area where WM's findings are most disturbing. They concluded that, as a whole, the top performing actively managed funds over a five year period had no more than a random chance of being the top performing funds over the following five year period.

What's more, the evidence suggested that the very poor performers actually had a better chance of being the stars of the future than the former stars themselves!

WM's conclusion was that "the key to benefiting from active management is the identification of superior managers before their superiority shows. Past performance figures would appear to have a limited role in this process". What hope then is there for finding that elusive manager?

NARROW THE FIELD

If your instinct is still to gamble, that's fine provided you're happy with the odds. If, however, you feel the risks of active management are just not worth it and trackers offer more for less, read on...



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Art trade hopes new codes will crack crime

BY DALYA ALBERGE
ARTS CORRESPONDENT

A SERIES of voluntary codes to reduce the illicit trade in art and antiques was introduced yesterday with the support of the Home Office, the art trade and the police.

Dealers and auctioneers are recommended to ask vendors to provide a name and address and to sign a form confirming that they are authorised to sell an item. They are advised to be suspicious of any piece whose asking price or requested reserve is below the market value and where a vendor wants cash. If dealers suspect something is stolen, they should attempt to retain the item while inquiries are made.

The need for action is highlighted by a recent survey from the Council for the Prevention of Art Theft. The registered charity, whose membership ranges from museums to the police, found that 150 privately owned historic properties open to the public have in the past five years suffered 196 thefts or attempted thefts. Some 994 objects worth £14.75 million were stolen: only 7 per cent have been recovered.

Mark Dalrymple, the council's chairman, said it was not only worried about famous art collections. "We are equally concerned to protect the family heirlooms found in many homes. These objects are not necessarily valuable in cash terms, but which may be of great sentimental value."

After three years' research, codes of "due diligence" have been developed by the Council for the Prevention of Art Theft with the Association of Chief Police Officers, the Norfolk Constabulary and the Metropolitan Police.

They have been adopted by organisations including the British Antique Dealers Association and the Antiquarian Booksellers Association.

However, Peter Gwynn,



A Roman sculpture stolen from a museum in Turkey, one of the most valuable works to which police alerted dealers

principal security surveyor at the insurers Hiscox and former head of the City of London Police CID, was among those who doubted whether some organisations would fully subscribe to the codes. They might instead use a "watered down" version.

He said the public should be careful when shopping for smaller items such as silver, jewellery, clocks, ceramics and glass and to ask dealers whether they have signed up to a "due diligence" code of conduct through a recognised trade association.

The trade body LAPADA, which represents 700,000 art and antiques dealers, is among those publishing its own code. Malcolm Hord, the chief executive, said its lawyers had advised amendments. The council's codes imposed some obligations "that bordered on the impractical", for example consulting loss registers in the case of a piece of furniture. There was also a sense that the code would create "an obligation on dealers to act as policemen".

LINKS

CoPat: www.copat.freeserve.co.uk
Art Loss Register: www.artlossregister.com
Trace, a database of stolen works: www.trace.co.uk
The Getty Information Institute for information about the Object ID scheme: www.gii.getty.edu/peo

Family terrorised by territorial pets

BY SIMON DE BRUXELLES, WEST OF ENGLAND CORRESPONDENT

A MARMOSSET seemed a lovely pet to cheer up a boy who had had an operation. But the Williams family had to flee their home when the monkey and its mate became enraged at the sight of a human being. Greg and Pauline Williams, of Bristol, found that the male marmoset and their son, Jordan, 8, got on famously: the monkey would sit on Jordan's shoulder and watch television.

Things went wrong after the Williamses bought a mate for their son's new friend. The marmoset pair, named Josh and Cruella, "bonded" and tore the kitchen apart, smashing crockery, and turning on the Williamses, hurling things at them and biting and scratch-

ing them and pulling their hair. The RSPCA was called in. Inspector John Pollock said: "It was terrifying. We were proactive fans because we don't have to deal with monkeys very often. At first they showed their bottoms and then they attacked."

Mr Williams, 51, a builder, said: "It was a nightmare: you had to duck in and out in case they attacked. They would jump at you in a pincer movement."

The monkeys now have the run of a large cage in a wildlife park in Somerset. An animal behaviourist, Emma Magnus, said: "When a marmoset bonds with a female they become very territorial."

MICHAEL MOORE: THE AWFUL TRUTH

Pet police collar errant owners

FROM JAMES BONE
IN NEW YORK

DOG-OWNERS have joined taxi drivers, cyclists, roller-bladers and old men who feed the pigeons as the latest target of New York's increasingly controversial crackdown on "quality of life" crimes.

Police in Manhattan's well-trodden Riverside and Central Parks have begun fining dog-walkers who let their pooches off the lead between 9 am and 9 pm, except in designated "dog runs".

In the first three days of the campaign the pet police issued 127 "leash-law" summonses, more than ten times the normal number. "The public support is high. Many park users were being turned off by reckless dogs," said Henry Stern, the parks commissioner.

The city is now seeking approval for an increase in the maximum fine from \$400 (£250) to \$1,000, with \$100 being the normal penalty for a first offence. The parks department is promising to set up a database of repeat offenders.

The decision to step up enforcement of the long-ignored "leash law" was taken after three free-roaming alaskan dogs mauled a pensioner in Central Park last autumn. But dog-owners are howling in protest, saying that the city should grant their pets more space.

Jeffrey Zahn, president of Friends and Lovers of Riverside Area Life, which represents 1,000 dog-owners, said the city set aside only 1 per cent of its favourite park for dogs, even though dog-walkers accounted for 15 per cent of all visitors.

Many New Yorkers are nonplussed by the sudden enforcement of obscure by-laws. "Quality of life" summonses have soared by 40 per cent to 500,000 a year since Rudolph Giuliani was elected as the city's first Republican Mayor in a generation.

Spiderman to join screen superheroes

Comic-strip star finally cuts the legal web, writes Giles Whittell

SPIDERMAN, like Batman and Superman before him, is at last destined for Hollywood.

The humanoid with the webbed skin and supernatural strength is to be the star of his own blockbuster with a budget expected to reach \$200 million (£125 million) and household names queuing up to play him. Jim Carrey and Leonardo DiCaprio are among those said to be interested in the part, which became available after a late-night deal between Sony Pictures and the Marvel Entertainment Group, ending one of the longest rights battles in film history.

Sony's Columbia Pictures division will pay Marvel between \$10 million and \$15 million as an advance against a portion of the box-office gross. The two companies will split

the huge proceeds from sales of Spiderman souvenirs.

The deal was agreed only after Sony and Marvel reached a separate accord with MGM, hours before a trial was due to assign ownership of Spiderman rights. Legal obstacles remain, but the Internet yesterday had the news that the Holy Grail of action films was at hand: a Spiderman epic directed by Titanic's James Cameron.

Conceived in 1962 by Stan

Lee, the legendary Marvel comic-strip artist, Spiderman is the invincible transformation of Peter Parker, an American high-school pupil who, after being bitten by a radioactive spider, acquires useful abilities such as climbing skyscrapers and spinning vast webs to ensnare his enemies.

The concept inspired a fervent strain of arachnophilia in Hollywood even before computer graphics enabled directors to mix cartoon and live-action convincingly. During the 1980s Marvel sold the screen rights to three independent production companies, all of which went bankrupt. Marvel itself re-emerged from bankruptcy only last year.

Mr Cameron, the toast of the film industry after Titanic's spectacular effects and \$1.8 billion in worldwide receipts, was paid \$3 million in 1991 for a "treatment", or outline, for a Spiderman film. John Calley, Sony's chairman, said his studio acquired the Cameron treatment as part of Sunday's deal. The consensus is that the film will be the Hollywood event when it is released.



The Hollywood elite are queuing to play Spiderman

www.marvel.com/marvel.html
Marvel, the publishers of the Spiderman comics.
people.com/entertainment/boxoffice/spiderman.html - Images of Spiderman from nearly 450 comics.
www.slg.com/spiderman/index.html - Spiderman profiles and reviews.



President Clinton outside a bookstore in Park City, Utah, where he had to borrow money from a Secret Service agent after his expired credit card was rejected

Clinton passes the buck as credit fails

FROM IAN BRODIE
IN WASHINGTON

MOST shoppers know how Bill Clinton felt when he plunked down his American Express card to buy four books - only to have it rejected. The presidential plastic had expired the day before.

"I ran it through the machine and back it came saying out of date," said Courtney Gannon, an assistant at Dollywood's bookshop in the ski resort of Park City, Utah, where the Clintons spent a short break. Mr Clinton laughed and said: "I probably have the new one at home." He did not have the necessary \$62 (£38) so a Secret Service agent helped him out with a short-term loan. The books were John Grisham's *The Testament* and Raymond Chandler's *Playboy*, plus two non-fiction books, *India*, a history by Stanley Wolpert, and *In Light of India*, by Octavio Paz, an author and poet who spent six years in Delhi. Mr Clinton cancelled a visit to India last year, after it and neighbouring Pakistan exploded nuclear devices. The trip has not yet been rescheduled.

A new poll shows Mr Clinton holding his high job-approval rating of 66 per cent, despite allegations by Juanita Broaddrick that he raped her 21 years ago.

Linda Tripp is meanwhile returning to the Pentagon in a new job. She has been working from home on a training manual since her tape recordings set off the Lewinsky scandal. Her new post will be as a public affairs specialist in the manpower data centre.

Starr inquiry turns America against independent counsels

By IAN BRODIE

THE Clinton Administration yesterday joined a growing chorus of voices opposed to extending the independent counsel law that enabled Kenneth Starr to accuse the President of impeachable offences over his affair with Monica Lewinsky.

The law is so fundamentally flawed that it ought to be scrapped, said Eric Holder, deputy attorney-general, in a report to the House Judiciary Committee which voted

along party lines for articles of impeachment against Mr Clinton last autumn.

The Watergate-era law covering investigation of alleged crimes by the President and other senior government officials is due to expire on June 30 unless Congress renews it.

Until now, the Clinton Administration has supported the law which was intended to prevent a repetition of Richard Nixon's infamous "Saturday Night Massacre" when he dismissed Archibald Cox for getting

too close to uncovering wrongdoing in the White House.

Janet Reno, the Attorney-General, has been criticised in recent months for refusing to appoint an independent counsel to investigate fund-raising abuses by the Clinton-Gore presidential campaign in 1996.

In fact, the law has suited neither Democrats nor Republicans who complained that the independent counsel enjoyed unlimited time and budgets for investigations. Democrats are still seething over

Mr Starr's continuing inquiries for which the bill is approaching \$50 million (£31 million). Republicans were aggrieved by the prolonged independent counsel investigation into the Iran-Contra scandal dating from the Reagan era.

Suggested alternatives to the law would put greater constraints on an independent counsel. Some voices have been raised against ditching the law in the wake of ill feeling caused by the Lewinsky affair.

"Cool it, think about it for a while and let the temper of these times soften," said the widely respected Howard Baker, a senator during Watergate and later President Reagan's chief of staff.

There has been a sharp decline in political support for the law, once considered essential to the integrity of investigating misconduct by high-level officials but now feared as concentrating unchecked powers in the hands of a single lawyer.

Mr Starr has done much to undermine the law by creating the public perception of a relentless pursuer of Mr Clinton and his associates dating back to Arkansas days. There have been 20 independent prosecutors of whom 13 had returned no indictments by last November.

□ Manchester, New Hampshire: Pat Buchanan, 60, the fiery conservative who shook up the past two presidential elections, launched his third White House campaign yesterday, vowing to fight a "polluted and poisoned" popular American culture. (Reuters)

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Full year dividend per share	12.8p	11.62p***
Shareholders' net assets	£5,793m	£5,098m

* Operating earnings before tax exclude charges for the directors' remuneration and are stated before integration costs and amortisation of goodwill.
** Based on 1997 operating results.
*** Final dividend representing the dividend that would have been paid had Norwich Union been a public limited company throughout 1997.

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The above information is derived from the 1998 Report and Accounts. Copies of the full Group accounts which include the audited statutory accounts (or the Summary Financial Statement) will be circulated to shareholders.

Budget curbs end the euro honeymoon

FRESH signs emerged yesterday of a widening economic gap among the nations of euro-land, reinforcing worries over the single currency's stability.

Figures showing diverging inflation rates heightened concern that the economies of the 11-nation zone are moving out of step, with Germany and Italy slowing, growth continuing in France and especially strong in Spain. The Netherlands and Ireland.

This prospect of an economic faultline through euro-land is adding to pressure on the currency, which has lost 7 per cent of its value against the dollar compared with its launch two months ago, and which fell to a new low this week. It is also fuelling tension between the social democratic politicians who run most European governments and the fiercely independent European Central Bank (ECB), which manages the currency with the primary goal of fighting inflation.

EU officials are denying there is any cause for alarm, noting that the longer-term outlook is healthy. "It's early days. We're not worried about anything, but you could say the euro's honeymoon is over," an EU official said yesterday.

The unexpected slide in the euro's value and the stumbling German economy have put paid to the "euro-phoria" of the January launch, when EU leaders hailed the dawn of a strong new global currency that would spur growth in euro-land and enable members to overtake the United States.

With anxiety in the air, all eyes are on Frankfurt where the ECB will decide tomorrow whether to leave the euro's interest rate unchanged at 3 per cent, or drop it in deference to Germany and the other states that are desperate to stimulate growth. Wim Duisenberg, the ECB's chief, is indicating that the bank will do nothing. "Our perspective is based on the euro zone and not just Germany," he said this week.

In other words, Germany, whose Finance Minister, Oskar Lafontaine, has been pub-

Diverging inflation rates raise concern for stability, Charles Bremner writes from Brussels

lically attacking the bank, faces a potential lesson in the implications of the one-size-fits-all regime of interest rates that critics see as the euro's big flaw. With interest rates set centrally, the main tool for governments is budget policy, but their hands are tied by tight euro-inspired ceilings on deficits.

If the German economy moves seriously out of line with those of France and others, the potential for political trouble is great, because of the country's place as the biggest EU economy and anchor of the currency scheme.

Critical politicians say the bank is too focused on its paramount duty of fighting inflation, which held steady in January at an annual 0.8 per cent in the 11 euro states — compared with a slight rise to 1.6 per cent in Britain. Germany, where fear of deflation is grow-



Duisenberg: bank will not defer to Germany

ing, was steady at 0.2 per cent. The rate dropped in Italy, but rose in France, Spain, The Netherlands and Belgium. Inflation in Portugal, The Netherlands and Ireland is running above the 2 per cent ceiling set by the bank.

Echoed by many experts, Mr Duisenberg is blaming the troubles of Germany and the other high unemployment states on a failure to reform their economies by injecting greater flexibility. The left-wing leaders hit back from a social democrat congress in Milan this week with demands for the bank to take employment into account.

Mr Duisenberg is accusing the politicians, and Herr Lafontaine in particular, of fueling the slide in the euro value with their attacks on bank policy. The other explanation for the slippage, Mr Duisenberg says, is the continuing boom in the United States. It is taken as given that the more Herr Lafontaine attacks the bank, the less willing it will be to seem to comply with the Germans by dropping rates.

Mr Duisenberg is part of an establishment chorus insisting that the euro's market slide is a short-term phenomenon that offers no threat to the currency zone. The euro is strong compared with the value of the old national currencies a year ago and foreign investors are still pouring money into euro-denominated bonds, they note. This implies that the bank is not about to raise interest rates to support the currency.

In effectively talking down the euro, Herr Lafontaine is making clear that Germany is not worried about a weak currency. The main benefit is that this makes euro zone exports cheaper for customers. However, other politicians and many EU officials see a weak euro as a bad advertisement for the credibility of Europe's grand monetary scheme. Against this background, EU leaders are delighted by Tony Blair's enthusiasm for the currency.

Leading article, page 17



Max Mara's 1999 autumn/winter ready-to-wear collection was unveiled in Milan yesterday, transforming couture trends into designs suitable for the high street

Mara makes his mark

FROM LISA ARMSTRONG, FASHION EDITOR, IN MILAN

THERE are days when you can forget that Milan's fashion industry is more concerned with money than creativity and days when you cannot — like yesterday. Day three of Milan Fashion Week kicked off with Max Mara, whose flagship collection specialises in beautifully made clothes, especially coats, and distils hot trends into wearable designs.

On that basis, next season we are going to be seeing a lot of duffel coats, leather detailing, fringed hems and camel hair, evening and night, worked into long full skirts and dresses with appliquéd gold patchwork. This wasn't ground-breaking stuff, but it was all slick, beautifully made and extremely desirable.

Unlike the attempt at Eighties revivalism by Alessandro

dell'Acqua later in the day, Treading where angels fear to, and he certainly shouldn't have. dell'Acqua dredged up the worst of the last decade and did nothing to ameliorate it. Out trudged bat-wing sleeves, leather drainpipe trousers and pussy-cat bows. This was the kind of collection press releases optimistically described as eclectic. Another word would be dross.

Giants escape chainsaw in lumber deal

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN LOS ANGELES

THE majestic ancient redwoods of northern California's Headwaters Forest have been saved from the chainsaw in an eleven-hour deal reached after more than a decade of sometimes violent struggle and the allocation of nearly half a billion dollars in public funds.

The trees, some of which are thought to be as old as Christianity, tower over younger redwoods in remote hill country, six hours' drive north of San Francisco.

As the largest groves of their kind still in private hands, they were in danger of being felled for sale by the Pacific Lumber Company until it agreed to preserve them late on Monday. Some 5,000 acres of "old-growth" forest will be preserved within a 10,000-acre parcel to be managed by state officials.

In addition, a much larger tract which provides a buffer zone round the ancient trees will be subject to strict rules on where and when the company may log. In return, Pacific Lumber will receive \$250 million (£153 million) from the federal Government and another \$230 million in all from California.

President Clinton, who has warmed to the environment as a political theme, even though few conservationists admire his track record, praised the deal as he returned to Washington from a Utah skiing holiday. "These redwoods are a natural treasure, as much a part of our legacy as the world's great libraries and cathedrals," he said.

Initially agreed two years ago, the deal had to be signed by Monday or the federal funds would no longer have been available.

It appeared to be scuppered when Pacific Lumber withdrew from talks last Friday. But the company re-entered negotiations by tele-

phone on Monday, apparently on the same terms as before. The intense negotiations also involved Bruce Babbitt, the Interior Secretary, and state resources officials.

Under the deal, the company may not touch the oldest trees and is barred from logging within 30ft of salmon streams in the 210,000-acre buffer zone.

"It was a gruelling experience, but the results are acceptable," John Campbell, president of Pacific Lumber, said.

Logging next to streams in recent years has clogged them with silt and led to the near-extinction of the local coho salmon. Pacific Lumber, a 130-year-old firm, was known until 1985 as a cautious steward of its lands. It was then bought by the Houston-based Maxxam Corporation, which had no history of forest management and sought to maximise logging revenues to help service debts acquired as a result of an unrelated savings and loan debacle in the 1980s.

The Maxxam chairman, Charles Hurwitz, has steadfastly refused to talk to environmentalists and has become a favourite bogeyman of the environmental movement.

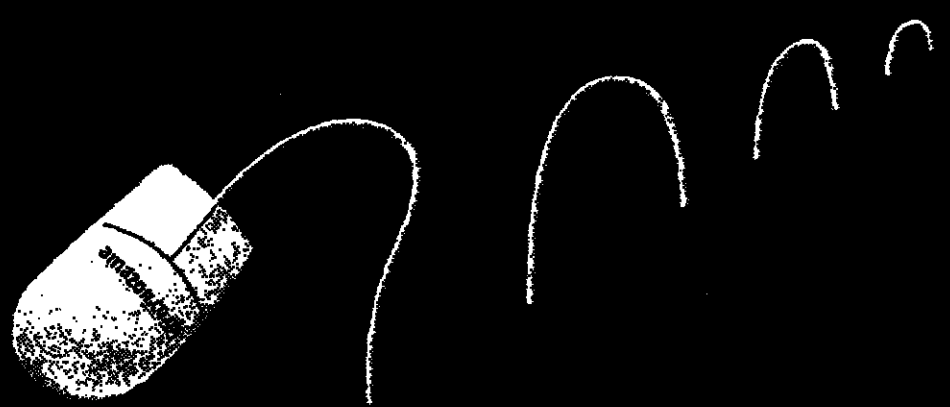
More than 1,000 protesters were arrested in the Headwaters Forest in 1996, and a smaller group made headlines the following year when police daubed liquid pepper spray on their eyes to end a sit-in in the company's head office.

On a nearby ridge, Julia "Butterfly" Hill has broken several records with a 15-month "tree-sit" in the upper branches of a still unprotected ancient redwood. She has vowed to stay there until a logging moratorium is declared for the entire region.



Saved from the chainsaw: some of the Californian redwoods are thought to be as old as Christianity

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WORLD IN BRIEF

Israeli Opposition 'will quit Lebanon'

Jerusalem: Ehud Barak, the leader of Israel's Labour Party, pledged to bring troops home from south Lebanon within one year of becoming Prime Minister (Christopher Walker writes). His announcement put the issue of withdrawal from Lebanon at the centre of the country's bitter election campaign.

Mr Barak's belated pledge caught the national mood as Israel buried Brigadier-General Erez Gerstein, 33, killed in southern Lebanon by the Hezbollah. His proposal also came as The Jerusalem Post featured an article to "Leave Lebanon" and Haaretz ran a column headlined "Let's Just Get The Hell Out".

Nigerian youths riot

Lagos: At least one person was killed and four were injured when mobs of Yoruba youths armed with petrol bombs attacked and destroyed two police stations, a police spokesman said. The protesters used sledgehammers to free dozens of prisoners. They also attacked officers and cut off the hand of a woman. Both stations are in strongholds of Olu Falae, who lost Saturday's Nigerian presidential election to General Olusegun Obasanjo. (AP)

Air France jet hijacked

Paris: The hijacker of an Air France plane carrying 75 passengers surrendered to police at Charles de Gaulle airport. The Italian-speaking man hijacked the A330 Airbus flying from Marseille to Paris Orly after threatening to detonate a bomb. (Suisse Bell writes). The pilot diverted to the capital's main airport. The hijacker released most passengers but six stayed with the crew while negotiations continued until his surrender.

Violinist awarded £18m

Chicago: A jury has awarded a prize-winning violinist Rachel Barton, 24, right, \$29.6 million (£18.5 million) for a train accident that cost her a leg and part of a foot. She was dragged more than 100 yards from a suburban platform when the strap of her violin case caught in a closing door in 1995. Railway lawyers claimed that she kept hold of the strap because her 200-year-old Amati violin was worth \$500,000. (AP)



Clay warriors moulder

Beijing: China's 2,000-year-old Terracotta Warriors are going mouldy because of the breath of thousands of tourists. Experts quoted in the China Daily said visitors to the site, near Xian, had raised temperature and humidity levels in buildings covering the ancient pits. About 7,000 clay soldiers were buried to guard the mausoleum of China's first emperor, Qin Shihuang. (AFP)

Pope aims for rap hit

Rome: The Vatican is to release a CD of the Pope's homilies and prayers set to rap music, as part of the 76-year-old pontiff's drive to "reach out to the young", officials said (Richard Owen writes). Abba Pater, masterminded by Sony Milan and Vatican Radio, will be released in 50 countries later this month. The Vatican hopes it will outsell the theme to Titanic.

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Eurocratic red tape stops French from hunting the bunting



The ortolan: a delicacy in France

THE plight of the tiny ortolan, a songbird regarded as one of the greatest delicacies in haute cuisine, will finally be resolved this week after an 18-year battle as the French Government agrees reluctantly to put the bunting on a list of protected birds.

The move came after the European Court of Justice threatened to fine the Government £700,000 (£73,000) a day if it continued to drag its feet over implementing a 1981 decree from its own Environment Ministry which would effectively ban hunting of the songbirds.

Successive governments have avoided enforcing the ban, for fear of antagonising the hunting lobby. So far, the only noticeable effect of the decree has been to raise the price of ortolans, which can fetch up to £35 on the black

The threat of a huge fine has saved the ortolan from the Gallic table, write Susan Bell in Paris and Derwent May

market. France's highest legal body, the Conseil d'Etat, ordered the Government to pay a £500 daily fine last month for failing to implement the ruling. But an Environment Ministry spokeswoman admitted yesterday that it was the threat of the enormous fine to the European Commission which forced the Government to capitulate.

An estimated 150,000 ortolans are captured and eaten every autumn as they migrate through southwest France on their way to North Africa and the Middle East. Once it lands in France,

the ortolan, which has the misfortune to taste like a mixture of truffles and foie gras, has been in legal limbo. Although hunting the bunting is technically illegal because it is not on the list of officially sanctioned game birds, local authorities turned a blind eye to the practice.

Ortolan consumption is not for the faint of heart. Once the birds are trapped, they are fattened on grain for several weeks before their beaks are plucked and their gizzards removed. The bird is then garnished and baked for seven

minutes before being devoured whole, bones, innards and all, in an elaborate ceremony.

The Gallic passion for this forbidden delicacy was highlighted when the dying François Mitterrand gorged himself on two of the birds at a last supper on New Year's Eve three years ago.

As is the custom, the former President draped his head with a large white linen napkin to protect fellow diners from the horrific spectacle as he consumed the charred birds whole. According to witnesses, there was an embarrassed silence broken only by the sound of crunching bones.

Mitterrand then leaned back in his chair, beaming with ecstasy. Eight days later he died.

Alain Juppé, the former Prime Minister and Gaullist Mayor of Bordeaux, who holds the dubi-

ous distinction of being the least popular leader since records began, succeeded in ousting the electorate, animal rights groups and Brigitte Bardot, the self-appointed defender of French wildlife, when he committed the political faux pas of admitting to *Elle* magazine that he too had indulged in a feast of ortolans.

A spokeswoman for the anti-hunting association, the Rassemblement d'Opposants à la Chasse, said yesterday: "The European population of ortolans is in decline. The Government must act swiftly."

The hunting lobby retorted that hunting ortolans is a tradition which goes back to the Romans and that only 40,000 are killed each year, amounting to less than 2 per cent of the European population.

Ortolan bunnings are common in summer across most of Europe. They do not nest in Britain but you can sometimes stumble across one that has drifted over the North Sea in autumn, when they migrate southwards.

They are about 6in long and look like pink-breasted yellowhammers. The males are particularly beautiful, with a greenish head, a yellow moustache and a yellow bib. They have stout beaks and long tails. Like yellowhammers, they sing in hedges and bushes in scrubland or along the edge of fields, but their song is a sweeter run of notes.

They are plump, which is what commends them to the table. There are more than ten million pairs breeding in Europe every summer, so they are not a particularly endangered species.

Hardliner quits as political chief of Kosovo rebels

FROM TOM WALKER IN BELGRADE

ADEM DEMACI, the father figure of the Kosovo Liberation Army, yesterday stepped down as its political front man after regional commanders said they could no longer accept his hardline stance, which is blocking the Contact Group's peace plans for the province.

The 64-year-old former political prisoner had been expected for several days to resign, after he was attacked in the Pristina press for undermining the Rambouillet peace talks and dashing American hopes of using airstrikes to break Belgrade's resistance to a Nato implementation force. Yesterday KLA sources confirmed that the bespectacled maverick, whose political dream was a southeastern European federation called "Balkania", had been summoned to KLA headquarters in the Drenica region over the weekend, where he received his marching orders.

Mr Demaci put a brave face on events, telling a press conference: "Since there are peo-

ple who can deal with politics better than I can, I have come here today to say farewell to you as the general political representative of the KLA." The KLA sources also said regional commanders' ad been worried that Mr Demaci's fragile health was not up to the rigours of the peace negotiations. He suffers from diabetes, and travels regularly for treatment at a clinic in Ljubljana. He also uses the Slovene capital as a base to meet the KLA's financial and military backers and is thought likely to remain active behind the scenes.

His removal clears the way for an injection of youth into the KLA's hierarchy, and yesterday Jakup Krasnicki, the guerrillas' spokesman, confirmed that Hashim Thaci, 29, will be Prime Minister of an interim "Kosovo" government that will rule KLA territory until elections are held under the Contact Group constitution for the province.

Mr Krasnicki also said that the guerrillas have been invited to send a delegation to

Washington before the next round of peace talks begins at Evreux in Normandy on March 15. The news has outraged Belgrade, where the main government newspaper, *Politika*, yesterday accused the State Department of complicity in genocide in Kosovo.

There is speculation in Pristina that Madeleine Albright, the US Secretary of State, will encourage the KLA to give up its weapons and transform itself into the KLP, or Kosovo Liberation Party. Along with Christopher Hill, the mediator, she is known to want the KLA leaders to commit themselves to signing the Contact Group peace plan before the Evreux talks begin.

Diplomatic sources in Belgrade confirmed last night that, whatever America might engineer ahead of the conference, its hope of threatening the Serb delegation again with airstrikes was diminishing. "The US does not have the support of its European allies," one official said. "There's no longer the will to bomb."



Adem Demaci in Pristina yesterday after resigning as the political representative of the KLA. Mr Demaci had attracted criticism for his opposition to peace talks

British troops rehearse for peace mission

FROM MICHAEL EVANS IN KRIVOLAC, MACEDONIA

ON a dusty plain in the middle of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia 100 miles from Kosovo, thousands of British troops are assembling with tanks and artillery for a peacekeeping operation across the Yugoslav border.

A total of 2,900 British troops are training to be part of the proposed 28,000-man multinational Nato-led force. Yesterday, watched by George Robertson, the Defence Secretary, the King's Royal Hussars — who last week were in Germany — fired live rounds from Challenger tanks across the plain at Krivolac.

By March 12, three days before the extended Kosovo peace talks resume at a French airbase at Evreux, the number of British troops in Macedonia will have increased to 4,400 — and if a peace settlement is signed, they will increase to 8,400.

Yesterday, on a brief visit to the troops at the Macedonian Army training area near Krivolac, Mr Robertson observed how large sections of the British Army have rapidly deployed from Germany to this tiny country which has a population of only two million. The training ground was

filled with about 150 armoured vehicles, including 14 Challenger tanks. Addressing hundreds of troops from the lead battle group based around the King's Royal Hussars, Mr Robertson promised that they would not have to "fight their way" into Kosovo.

He emphasised that the proposed operation would be peacekeeping, not military intervention. However, he was not able to say when or if they would cross into Kosovo.

Mr Robertson estimated that Operation Agricola, the codename for Britain's participation in the proposed Kosovo Force (KFOR), would cost £150 million in the first six months.

The French are also here in growing numbers, and 2,000 US Marines are waiting off the Greek port of Salonika for the order to land and move up into Macedonia.

Provisionally, Kosovo has been divided into five "regional" command boundaries for the Nato peacekeeping operation, with the British in central and southern areas of the province. The Americans have provisionally been allocated the north, the French and Italians the east and west, and the Germans the southwest.

Cook visits a rudderless Russia

FROM ANNA BLUNDY IN MOSCOW

ROBIN COOK, who arrives in the northern port of Murmansk today to visit a nuclear reprocessing plant, has pressing issues to discuss with the Russian Government, including Kosovo and the Russian arms to Iraq scandal.

But the Foreign Secretary has come to a country whose President is in hospital once again and whose Prime Minister is on holiday in the Black Sea resort of Sochi amid rumours that his vacation was not voluntarily undertaken and that his removal is afoot.

Mr Cook is due to fly to Sochi on Friday for a meeting with Yevgeni Primakov, the Prime Minister and the man tipped to be Russia's next President, although he continues firmly if unconvincingly to deny any intention of running.

A new poll puts dissatisfaction with President Yeltsin at 90 per cent and approval of Mr Primakov at 56 per cent and, if one is to believe the Russian press, it is this discrepancy in ratings that may be the Prime Minister's undoing.

Mr Yeltsin does not take well to those who would step into his shoes and Mr Primakov's public appearances have noticeably multiplied in recent days. It is believed that the ailing Mr Yeltsin's sudden return to work a fortnight ago, the cause of his renewed hospitalisation, was precipitated by Mr Primakov's increasingly high profile.

Dmitri Yakushtkin, the presidential press spokesman, said that Mr Yeltsin had "firmly persuaded" Mr Primakov to go on holiday. Rumours,

meanwhile, are rife that senior government members upon whom the Prime Minister relies might be for the chop.

The Prime Minister's enthusiasm to maintain a firm hold over the media and Russia's unruly regions has been much in evidence lately and Interfax reported yesterday that a meeting with President Clinton might be included in his visit to Washington this month.

"Figuratively speaking, he [Primakov] has caught up with Yuri Luzhkov [the Mayor of Moscow] in terms of 'cutting ribbons'," *Argumenty i Fakty* said.

Komsomolskaya Pravda speculated that a Cabinet reshuffle may take place while Mr Primakov is in Sochi. The continuing media speculation about Mr Primakov's intentions and Mr Yeltsin's attitude towards them prompted the two men to make a joint television appearance last week in which the President declared that he would remain in office until 2000 and that Mr Primakov would remain Prime Minister until that time.

□ **Siberian stand-off:** About 60 fundamentalist Christians took over a public building in the Yakutskaya region of eastern Siberia, and threatened to commit suicide if the authorities forced them out. Russian media reported yesterday.

Security forces surrounded the district building in Aldan, which was taken over by Pentecostals on Monday to protest against a January decision by residents of their village, Kutana, to expel them. (AFP)

According to the official report, Torayev shot himself through the mouth. But his mother said a new post-mortem examination could prove whether the trajectory of the bullet was consistent with suicide, or whether it showed he had been murdered.

Gianluigi Marrone, the Vatican lawyer who conducted the inquiry, said he was confident any examination of Torayev's body would confirm the Vatican account.



Torayev: mother claims he was framed

But his mother, who lives in Switzerland, said she believed her son had been framed. One theory says there was a plot inside the Vatican to kill Estermann, said by German papers to have been an agent for East Germany before the fall of communism. He was killed the day he became the new Swiss Guards commander.

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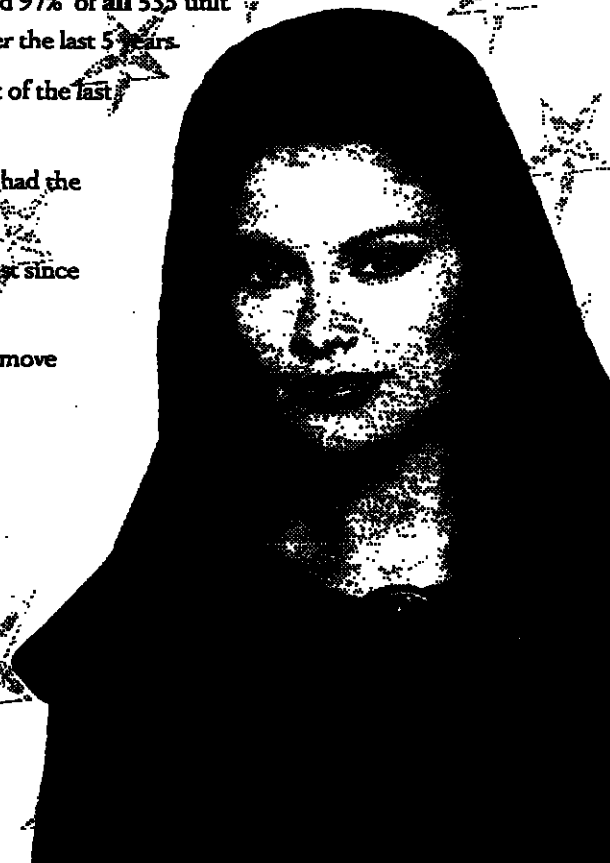
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an evening with **John le Carré**

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Times readers are invited to a rare evening with John le Carré, one of Britain's best-selling novelists, on Sunday, March 28, at 7pm.

Introduced by the Editor of The Times, Peter Stothard, the internationally acclaimed author will talk about his life and work, and read from his latest novel *Single & Single*. If you would like to ask John le Carré a question, please e-mail - johnlecarre@the-times.co.uk. For more details visit The Times/le carré website at www.the-times.co.uk/lecarre.html.

The event, which forms part of The Word literary festival, will be held at the LSE Peacock theatre, Portugal Street, off Kingsway, London WC1. Tickets cost £9 and can be booked on 0171-863 8222

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مكتبة الأمل

Cold facts of global warming

The discovery of ancient ice at the South Pole is forcing a rethink on climate theories, says Nicholas Booth

In Antarctica, you are either too hot or too cold. That's how Dr David Sugden describes living conditions at the South Pole where he moves around in the coruscating cold in layers of clothes and impressive-looking hoods.

He could just as well be describing the enduring controversy about the frozen continent's climate. For years, glaciologists have debated whether the Antarctic climate has undergone periodic warmings or remained freezing cold. As the man who discovered the world's oldest ice, Dr Sugden believes he has solved the mystery.

A professor of geography at Edinburgh University, he believes he has proof that the Antarctic has long been in deep freeze, implying that the Earth's climate as a whole is far more resilient than had been thought. Reports of catastrophic effects to come from global warming may well be exaggerated, he says.

"We've argued that the Antarctic ice has been very stable for a long time. Now we have shown that there is a genuinely large lump of ancient ice in a dry valley. Its survival implies that the climate must have been similar in the past."

Few people thought that ice could survive for eight million years, even in Antarctica. Along with American colleagues, Dr Sugden published his findings in 1995, but there was little reaction from the outside world. Chris McKay, a biologist with Nasa, observes: "They produced a paper called 'Miocene ice in Antarctica'. That's another way of saying 'This is the world's oldest ice'. Most ice on Earth has only been around for a few hundred thousand years."

Recently, Mr McKay shared a tent with Dr Sugden on the floor of Beacon Valley in Antarctica, where they were equipped with drills and ground-penetrating radars.

The dry valleys are associated with tragedies of earlier expeditions. They were discovered by Robert Falcon Scott on his first visit to the southern continent in 1905.

Even by the breathtaking standards of vertiginous landscapes of sculpted ice, the valleys were a revelation. Climatically, they are bizarre — drier than the Gobi desert with little water vapour available to fall as snow. They are cut off from the nearby ice by the towering Transantarctic Mountains and, over the millennia, have been peppered with volcanic ash and dust.

"I've been down to the south a dozen times," Dr Sugden says. "It came as quite a surprise to find old glacial ice under the rubble of the dry valleys."

The ice in Antarctica plays a fundamental role in modifying climate. Although it covers only about 10 per cent of the total landmass on Earth, Antarctica contains about 90 per cent of the world's ice. Polar icecaps keep the Earth cool, with the ice limiting the exchange of heat between the atmosphere and the ocean in the polar regions. What happens to Antarctic ice is viewed as a marker for global climate change: the first signs of global warming are likely to be seen at the South Pole.

The controversy stems from the disputed age of the ice in the dry valleys and hangs on the question of how hot or cold the climate has been in the past. The advocates of periodically warmer climates have examined microscopic flora which could have thrived in warmer times if the surrounding regions were deglaciated. "We think these things blew in from elsewhere at a later date," Dr Sugden says. "They are found so widely in the ice over the rest of the continent."

He and his colleagues have come at the problem from a different angle: volcanic ash. There are active volcanoes in Antarctica today; in the past, they could have spewed untold quantities of ash and dust into the atmosphere which rained down into the dry valleys. By looking at argon isotopes within the ash, Dr Sugden's team has dated the ice to eight million years. After their earlier paper, more recent extensive analyses have bolstered their findings. "When you have nine out of ten grains giving you

this age, you can be pretty certain you're right," he says.

But could the ice have been just a few metres deep and a more recent phenomenon, caused by water seeping into the moraines when warmed by sunlight during the austral summer? Samples of the ice, analysed by Belgian researchers, show that their structure is glacial, having the characteristic shape of snowflakes packed together over time. And the ground radar used on the most recent research trip shows that the ice extends for at least 120 metres below the surface.

What does this mean? Dr Sugden believes that it could have a curious outcome on the future of the continent. The Antarctic is bisected by the Transantarctic Mountains. Climatically, it is a continent of two halves, a distinction which informs the debate on global warming.

Western Antarctica is more unstable because most of the land on which the ice rests is below sea level. Ice continues to spread out to the sea, forming ice shelves that are glued to the landmass by the freezing cold. "The ice is like a ship that is aground," Dr Sugden says. "If temperatures rise, the sea level could rise by a few metres, though this has not been measured yet."

But Eastern Antarctica, in which the dry valleys are located, is a different matter. Containing ten times more ice than the western half, the results from Beacon Valley suggest that it is much more stable. Eastern Antarctica is effectively a giant dome of ice that rises some four kilometres above sea level because its underlying rock is higher.

Dr Sugden believes that this larger part of the ice sheet will act as its own thermostat and control the climatic conditions. Increase the temperature and water will go into the atmosphere as vapour, form snow and, paradoxically, increase the snow cover. "To get rid of this ice, you're going to have to do something very, very drastic," he adds. "Our findings show that the climate has been stable in the past and would be expected to remain so."

If all the ice in Antarctica were melted, then global sea levels could rise by 60 metres. But Dr Sugden believes that the curious ice found in the dry valleys is telling us that that is a very unlikely event indeed.



The ice in Antarctica plays a fundamental role in modifying climate. The continent contains 90 per cent of the world's ice

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Research funding ☐ Underwater hearing aid ☐ Heart fears

Wanted: a rich man to back bright ideas

IS THERE a multimillionaire out there willing to support a new approach to funding research? It comes with a good track record, heavyweight supporters and the backing of the British Technology Group. All it needs is a few million pounds from someone who does not share the view that, as far as British science is concerned, all is for the best in the best of all possible worlds.

The man behind the Breakthrough Research Fund is Don Braben, a physicist-turned-Whitehall science adviser who, for a decade in the 1980s, ran a company called Venture Research. Backed by BP, Venture Research sought radical ideas in research, the sort that scientists find difficult to fund through conventional channels. By 1990, when a shift in corporate policy ended BP's interest, Venture Research had supported some 26 research programmes at a total cost of £15 million — not a lot of money compared with the research councils.

Given that scientists turned to Venture because the usual avenues were closed to them, the success rate was high. Among Braben's chosen few was Oxford chemist Steve Davis, whose company, Oxford Asymmetry, is now worth more than £200 million. Venture also supported Ken Seddon, then at Sussex, now a professor at Queen's University, Belfast, whose new approach to chemical solvents is attracting considerable interest.

Since BP pulled the plug, Braben has been looking for new sponsors. An obvious target

was Nesta, the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts, set up by the Government as a fresh approach to funding "the nation's most creative and inventive people". Nesta will have an income of £10 million a year to support such people, so on the face of it they make a perfect match for Braben and his new initiative, the Breakthrough Research Fund. But Nesta has apparently decided against supporting him.

Braben argues that his approach is the best way of getting money to highly creative scientists whose ideas are unlikely to appeal to the committees that dominate research council funding. In his recent book

Egg and Ego, Professor Jonathan Slack, of the University of Bath, identifies the problem as the fact that nothing is funded unless it is guaranteed to succeed — and that proposals that are guaranteed to succeed are not at all interesting.

"Research is like investment on the financial market," he says. "Small rewards can be had for little risk, but big rewards mean big risks indeed." And asking a committee to set research strategy "has about as much chance of showing creativity and originality as a large canvas painted by a committee of art school directors".

Braben's catch is that to escape from committees he has to persuade a committee to back him. Despairing of that, he is now combing the lists of the world's richest men in the hope of finding one prepared to set the ball rolling. "We have shown we can do it," he says. "This is a great opportunity we could be throwing away."



SCIENCE BRIEFING
Nigel Hawkes

Sound way to protect the whales

TWO British consultants, Douglas Gillespie and Oliver Chapell, have devised a way to protect whales and dolphins from the loud noises made by oil prospectors.

A common technique when searching for oil under the seabed involves creating seismic waves by explosives and then observing their reflection off the underlying rock strata. This can provide hints about where oil and gas may be trapped.

Whales and dolphins have sensitive ears, which they use for long-distance communication. Because of the potential harm that explosions may do, many countries now ban this technique when whales or dolphins are sighted. But in rough weather they can be hard to spot.

The alternative proposed by the two consultants, and reported in *Scientific Computing World*, is a software program that will run on a PC and will analyse sounds emitted by the mammals to help to locate them.

The program is based on pattern recognition techniques developed at the European Particle Physics Laboratory, CERN, in Geneva. But unlike the CERN devices, which were expensive purpose-built chips, the new program will run on an ordinary Pentium PC. This means that seismic researchers will be able to take them to sea without worrying too much if they are damaged.

Chlamydia link to heart disease

A MECHANISM that might explain why infection with a bacterium is linked to heart disease has been found by a team from Canada, Austria and America.

A protein on the surface of several types of *Chlamydia* is almost identical to a protein in myosin, the heart muscle. Dr Kurt Bachmaier, of Ontario Cancer Institute, and colleagues report in *Science*.

By mimicking a host protein, bacteria can fool the

immune system into believing that they are friend rather than foe, but sometimes the disguise fails. In this case the invader is attacked and the protein being mimicked can fall victim to friendly fire.

Three types of *Chlamydia* are implicated: those responsible for a form of pneumonia; a sexually transmitted disease; and those found in bird droppings, which can also cause human infections.

Chlamydia infections are so common that almost everybody is likely to experience at least one during their lifetime, the team says, although symptoms may be barely noticeable. Whether such infections triggered heart disease in mice depended on genetic differences between the mouse strains.

In humans, they speculate,

both genes and environmental factors — such as the classical risk factors of obesity, high blood cholesterol, inactivity and high blood pressure — may predispose some people to heart disease triggered by *Chlamydia*.

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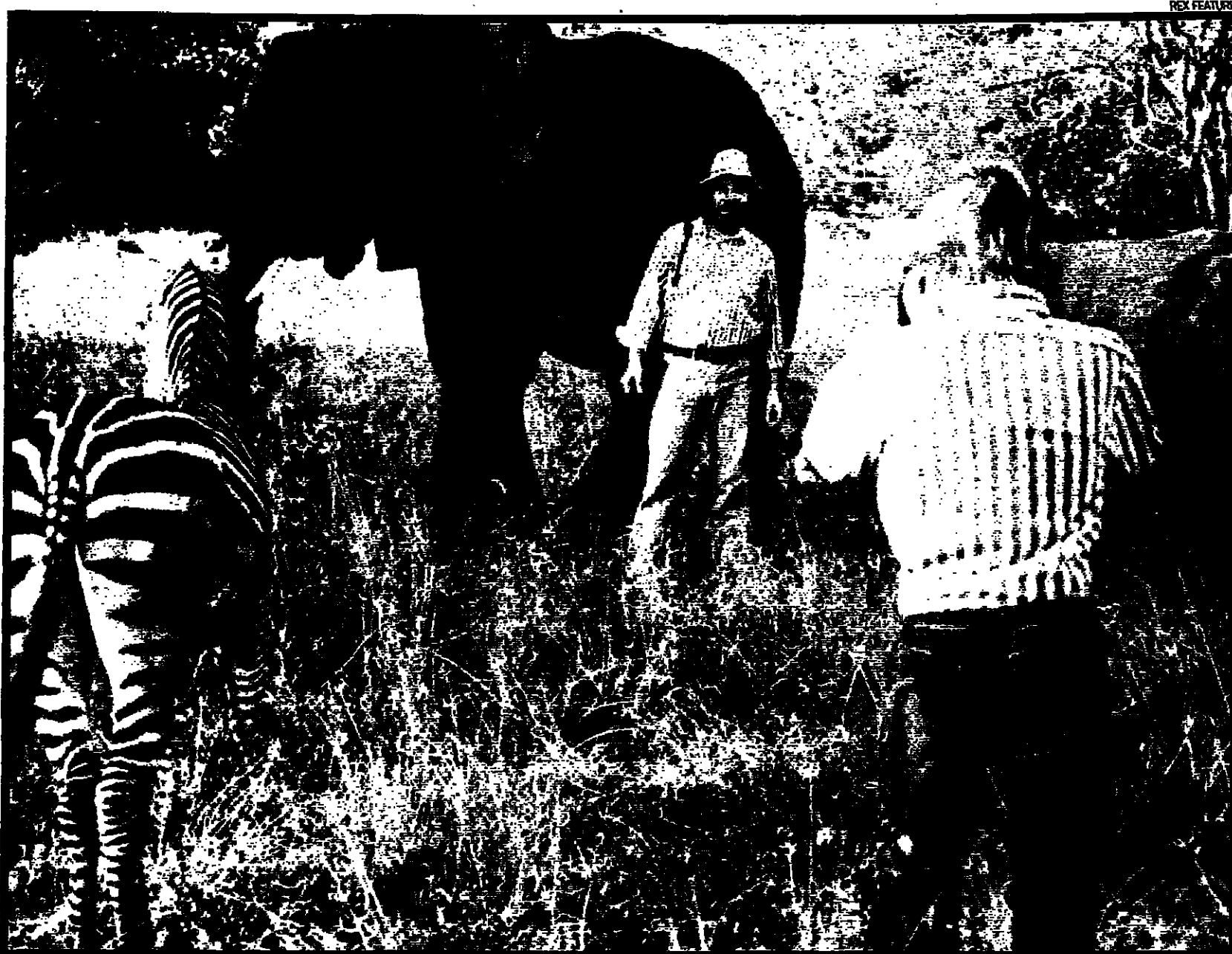
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How safe is your holiday?

As I plunged into the sea off St Lucia, I realised that I was not the only devotee of sunset dips. In the distance I could see a silver plume, a pair of pearl earrings and matching necklace, all belonging to someone doggy-paddling. I splashed towards the bobbing figure. It was Lady Horlick. She was on her annual holiday to St Lucia with her husband, Sir John, a scion of the bedtime-drink dynasty. When I joined them later they noted that as package holidays became the standard method of travel, the tourists visiting St Lucia had little idea of the island's potential dangers.

It was early 1994 and I was a travel reporter investigating the increasing level of crime experienced by British holidaymakers in the Caribbean and other exotic destinations. During my research it became clear that the expansion in mass tourism to such places, and the rise in attacks on travellers, was not unconnected. Since my swim with Lady Horlick, the number of tourists who become victims of crime in far-flung spots has continued to

The growing demand for adventure holidays has led tour operators to venture into potentially dangerous territory despite the risks to tourists, says Edward Welsh



Happy holidays: until tour companies become more honest about the potential risks of distant parts, tourists will continue to be killed.

Travel is now in everyone's range. And tourists attract villains

rise, culminating in yesterday's murder of four Britons in Uganda during a trip to watch gorillas in the Bwindi National Park.

To some extent the emergence of this kind of mass tourism reflects changes at home: rising incomes and aspirations have stimulated demand for more exotic holidays. But the main driving force behind the development of remote and undeveloped spots as package holiday destinations has been tour operators themselves. Just as the fashion business comes up with a new "black" every season to encourage shoppers to spend money, so the travel industry each year creates a buzz about a fresh destination. I would regularly attend brochure launches by tour operators in swanky venues in West London where journalists were told, as if being let into a trade secret, the latest "in" haunt.

To come up with new destinations, however, package holiday companies constantly ignore lessons one assumes that they would have learnt in previous years from sending clients to potentially dangerous countries.

Michael Winner, who has been a regular visitor to Barbados for decades, has noticed the changes. "Travel used to be just for the rich. Now it's in everyone's range. People on holiday always assume that everything is going to be wonderful. Yet tourists attract villains."

Traditionally, mass-market tourism, which first emerged in the Sixties, was centred on the Mediterranean, especially Spain. But in the mid-Eighties the likes of Thomson and Airtours became more ambitious and began operating flights outside Europe. Holiday prices, to countries that had once been the preserve of only the rich or backpackers, were slashed. Kenya, Thailand and Australia came within the reach of the Besidorm brigade. The most popular new destinations were Florida, Egypt and the Caribbean. The first

was promoted as a family holiday destination, with a real magic castle, cheap hire cars and sandy beaches. The film *Death on the Nile* helped to sell Egypt, while the Caribbean was portrayed as a playground of the rich.

The reality was different. Many British holidaymakers flew into Miami, unaware that it was one of the most violent cities in America. Egypt was, and remains, no safer. With a vast, impoverished peasantry channelling its frustrations into religious fanaticism and outraged by Western tour-

ists' dress code, the country failed to live up to its image as a luxurious, exotic setting for a movie based on an Agatha Christie novel. Many islands in the Caribbean suffer from the same problems.

But the new breed of long-distance traveller was naive. As the Horlicks had articulated only too plainly, experienced independent travellers and Britons who live in foreign countries where violence is endemic know that the best way to keep out of trouble is to avoid drawing attention to oneself. Where possible, they do as the lo-

cals do. When I first visited Manhattan the advice I received from New Yorkers was to act as if asleep while on the subway, a technique used by the locals to keep weirdos away. The newcomers were not so savvy.

Imagine the mind of a crack addict standing at a road junction in a poor ghetto in Miami around 1990 as an Oldsmobile pulled up. The car was new and the family inside was white, their camcorder and bags on the back seat. First the robbers waited for the tourists to get lost.

Then they began hunting them down on the freeways and in their hotels. The package holiday industry bears a large share of the responsibility for Britons arriving in these countries, ignorant about what to expect and how to behave. Despite its eagerness to promote new destinations, it has been slow to warn of potential hazards, usually failing to provide even the most basic advice until after a Briton has been robbed, or worse.

By nature the holiday business is not inclined to draw attention to potential dangers because it fears creating a negative image in its brochures. The vast expansion of the package holiday industry up to the mid-Eighties was based on the image of carefree beach holidays in the sun. This approach was realistic at the time because the companies were selling packages to purpose-built resorts on the Costa. But although destinations have become more exotic, tour operators rarely issue warnings.

In the early Nineties tour operators did begin to address the dangers of holiday-

When tourists are killed, tour operators renew their charm offensive

ing in Florida, advising clients to keep a low profile and to adopt many of the survival techniques employed by independent travellers. The new policy was successful. Attacks on tourists dropped and have now almost disappeared. When a tourist is murdered abroad, tour operators always renew their charm offensive to travel journalists. In 1993, after a string of murders in Egypt, Thomas Cook invited me to cruise the Nile: this would demonstrate that the destination remained safe.

Yet, tour operators never seem to learn and the consequences end up as front-page news. Despite the disasters experienced by travel companies in the "new" destinations of the late Eighties and early Nineties, tour operators followed with Russia, more of sub-Saharan Africa and previously remote parts of South America. Holidaymakers are reassured that the companies they are travelling with know about potential dangers. But until tour operators are more honest about the risks, holidaymakers will continue to be killed.

Michael Palin, who has done more than most television personalities to infect Britons with the travel bug, urges holidaymakers to "swot up more before heading abroad. Tour operators should give the fullest information possible, however unpalatable. You should take as much from life as possible but ensure that you are well-read before you leave," he says.

Which are the most dangerous destinations? Jon Ashworth reports

Ten days in Iran, just £2,000 each

Not long ago a fortnight on a beach in Spain was the limit of most people's foreign travel. Today's intrepid travellers would scoff at the thought. Hardly a corner of the world remains untouched for those with the money and inclination for adventure, even if it means risking your life.

As foreign travel has boomed, so the information available to travellers has expanded well beyond the cursory brochure. Control Risks, a London-based consultancy, provides country-by-country analysis for businessmen and holidaymakers planning forays into regions where the risks include kidnapping and terrorism.

Control Risks rates countries for political and security risk on a scale ranging from insignificant, with stable government and virtually no violent crime, to extreme, where law and order has broken down. It also provides a travel risk rating, updated weekly, and singles out problem regions and provinces.

A chillingly candid picture is provided in *Outlook 99*, the annual Control Risks global survey. Information is gathered from regional analysts and tailored for multinational corporations looking to do business in riskier countries.

Uganda is rated medium-risk: "internal unrest or violence frequently perpetrated by terrorists or criminals, though there are no areas completely outside the State's control." Allied Democratic Front rebels, it notes, are expected to continue attacks in western Uganda, while the Lord's Resistance Army's brutal campaign against rural communities and government supporters continues in the north.

The Ugandan Government is expected to declare an off-limits zone in the Ruwenzori Mountains, where foreigners were abducted by the ADF in mid-1998. This will add to the country's troubles by limiting precious tourist revenue — a familiar refrain throughout Africa. Neighbouring Rwanda is expected to slide further into anarchy, with fighting and massacres in rural areas.

Latin America tops the world's kidnapping league, with Colombia and Mexico the worst offenders. Kidnapping rates have increased in the past five years, partly because kidnappers know that there is

little chance that they will be caught. In Colombia, reported kidnappings rose by 13 per cent in 1997 to 1,822, including 33 foreigners, with total ransom demands of \$74 million. A further 480 abductions were reported in the first half of 1998. Many kidnaps go unreported.

Colombia is the only country in Latin America where foreign executives are frequently targeted, with between 30 and 40 such abductions each year. In Mexico, criminal gangs mostly kidnap wealthy locals, although foreigners are occasionally targeted. Kidnap gangs frequently operate with the protection of both former and serving police officers. There were 700 reported kidnappings in Mexico in 1997.

In Peru, where Inca ruins and Andes trekking attract tourists, the Government was forced to pass emergency legislation in mid-1998 to combat a wave of kidnappings of wealthy Peruvians. Foreigners are not targeted for kidnap for ransom, but in Lima they face the threat of short-term abductions known locally as *secuestros al paso*. Victims are typically held for several hours and forced to withdraw money from cash dispensers.

Egypt, scene of one of the most brutal attacks so far on tourists, the 1997 Luxor massacre in which 58 people were killed, is rated low-risk, rising to medium-risk in Cairo, Luxor and Aswan.

Control Risks says that public revulsion at the Luxor massacre has undermined sympathy for Islamic militant groups, and it expects the security environment to improve.

Foreign-based militants in alliance with Osama bin Laden, the terrorist financier, have threatened to target American and Jewish interests in Egypt. Embassies are considered most at risk. Iran, which is open to Western tourists travelling in groups, is deemed low-risk in terms of security but high-risk politically, with fears that a power struggle between rival political factions will erupt into street conflict before the year is out.

South Africa is rated a medium security risk, with high-risk pockets around townships outside Durban, Cape Town and Johannesburg. Control Risks says that steps to combat South Africa's high crime rate may be a case of "too little, too late". Further

uncertainty will accompany the general elections, expected in May.

Great uncertainty hangs over Indonesia, which has borne the brunt of the Asian economic crisis. Inflation is running at 80 per cent and interest rates are a crippling 50 per cent. Most companies are bankrupt, and the number of people earning less than \$1 a day more than doubled from around 18 million in 1996 to 40 million or more by the end of 1998. The result has been a rapid spread of lawlessness and violent crime. Foreigners have been robbed, attacked and threatened in increasing numbers as criminal gangs become bolder and more ruthless. Other destinations in the region deemed high-risk include Papua New Guinea and Cambodia.

Trouble spots in the former Soviet Union include Kazakhstan, where the security environment is expected to deteriorate as social and economic divisions grow. Increasing violent crime in Almaty and other cities poses a growing threat to expatriate staff.

Yet there is no shortage of tour operators willing to take you off the beaten track. Yesterday, Exodus Travels in Bournemouth, southwest London, was offering ten-day tours of Iran from £2,000 per person. Another potentially risky package involves travelling by truck through Mexico, Guatemala and Belize, staying in hotels but venturing into the jungle to inspect Mayan ruins. The 16-day tour costs from £1,275 per person.

Explore Worldwide, whose clients died in Yemen in December, is not currently running tours to that country. However, the Aldershot-based company hopes to resume visits to Yemen in October and is taking bookings for 15-day desert treks starting at £1,190 per person.

Explore has also temporarily suspended its Horn of Africa package, which involves extensive travel within Ethiopia, deemed one of the 15 most dangerous countries, with high-risk areas in Tigré province and near the border with Somalia. Explore hopes to resume 14-day tours of the region from October and is accepting bookings at £1,695 per person. A decision on whether to proceed with the tours will be taken nearer the time.

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Ol' Dixie's Sixties struggles

The fight to overcome
racism still divides the States

I love it when people complain that American culture is taking over. It hasn't even taken over the United States. It certainly hasn't taken over the South.

In my last week in the United States, after three years of reporting on the country as *The Times* US Editor, I took a long drive through the Deep South, from Jackson, Mississippi, to Atlanta, Georgia. The States of the Old Confederacy still feel like a different country from the rest of the United States, certainly culturally. But the paradox of my time in America is that the South has been central to national politics.

The town of Selma, Alabama, gets straight to the point. Its favourite slogan is that its history runs "from the Civil War to Civil Rights". The red brick and ironwork of its centre has a certain elegance, unchanged from the 1870s. But the heart of the town is still deserted, strangled by a tight grid of shopping malls. The town lives — to the extent it does — off its tourist trade. But the boast that is, presumably, intended to draw tourists to Selma is an odd one. Its role in both the Civil War and the Civil Rights struggle was hardly a happy one.

The Battle of Selma, in 1865, was a tragic last act in the War between the States. The South, which had had the better of the earlier exchanges, was facing eventual annihilation at the hands of the numerically superior North.

Three thousand barely trained Confederate troops were crushed within hours by 9,000 Union soldiers. It was a final stand for the defenders of plantation culture and the system of slavery.

One hundred years later, Selma became a byword for the struggle to win voting rights and equal treatment for African-Americans. A Civil Rights march to the state capital Montgomery was halted as it crossed the Selma bridge. Marchers were knocked down with horses and beaten with batons. The brutal affair became known as Bloody Sunday, the first Civil Rights disturbance to be so named.

The town doggedly celebrates both conflicts. It is an example of the curious parallel tourist trails weaving across the Deep South: one for Civil Rights pilgrims, the other for those wistful about the lost romance of plantation days. This weekend the bridge — a grey, humpbacked arc over the black mud of the Alabama River — will be the site of an annual tribute to the Civil Rights movement, when many of the original marchers will retrace their steps.

At the same time, many of the old plantation houses are preparing for crowds coming to see the spring magnolia blossoms. The family friends who show visitors around the pillared white mansions — Confederate flag hanging over the porch — will tell you that they are having hoop skirts made for the annual re-enactments of the Civil War.

The juxtaposition says everything about the remaining ambivalence of many white people in the region to the

American project of unifying the country. In both the Civil War and the Civil Rights movement, the federal Government insisted that if the United States was to be a single country, then there were certain principles which all must observe.

You will not, of course, hear many openly express racism. Those mourning the Confederacy deny hotly that they are implicitly condoning slavery. But the persistent segregation of the region is still striking, particularly in education, where all-white private schools sprang up in droves after the Civil Rights movement. The emphasis on the region's cultural separatism is constant, from the food, to the strong military tradition, to the emphasis on family.

That is not to say all the propaganda about a New South is false. The economic transformation of the past 30 years is real, at least for the Carolinas and Georgia. Atlanta is a miracle, its glass towers rising from the rich farms around it. But the poverty of the Mississippi Delta is still shocking, if alleviated these days by food stamps, better water supplies, and jobs from the new casinos. The rural slums of Alabama are, if anything, even more deprived. Families sit on a decaying porch behind punctured mosquito netting, looking blank when asked directions to the county seat ten miles away.

The South's persistent separatism has been, and remains, the greatest single influence on national party politics. The Civil War turned the region Democrat in a block, in furious protest against Abraham Lincoln's Republicans. The Civil Rights movement shattered the Democratic grip, sending naturally conservative politicians to the Republican fold. In the past year, their loathing for Bill Clinton's liberalism has fuelled the Lewinsky investigation, in the process threatening to split the Republican Party into neat northern and southern parts.

In the 2000 elections, the southern Republicans' call for states to have more independence from Washington is likely to be one of the loudest themes. And one of the most controversial: the states' rights brigade would have a more popular case were the region's history not so bitter, and the record of abuses of its independence not so long.

In many ways, the South is the least American part of America. The US's preoccupation with its cohesion has been a constant cause of transatlantic misunderstanding. It is easy, from Europe, to mock political correctness and to ignore the sores it tries to heal, however ineptly. But the efforts the US has made to glue the South into the rest of the country are at the heart of its unique experiment in persuading so many different people to live harmoniously together. If that failed, the entire project would have failed.

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Brownwen Maddox



Licence to analyse

The future of spying is in cool
assessment, not sexy intercepts

So George Smiley has a job after all. He may now be a pensioner with a hearing aid, but they bug his Zimmer frame and there is still something odd about the way he clears his glasses. His Boswell, John Le Carré, visits regularly at his Chelsea home, and they ramble on about "Testify" and some meeting with a Sanskrit professor in a cabbage field outside Minsk. "That night we turned the world upside down," Smiley recalls mistily, for the umpteenth time. "You know, George," says Le Carré, "the Circus still needs you. Iraq has been another sign of things to come. The lords and masters are toadying to Washington as usual, over Kosovo. I think Le Carré's got Alzheimer's." He drums his bus pass on his knee. "Plus ça change."

Speaking in Liverpool on Monday, David Cornwell (alias John Le Carré) did his bit for the service where he once worked, and for his latest book. Sadly, Smiley is no more, but the ghost of this most endearing postwar anti-hero hovers over all the author's work, as if waiting to be called on at the last minute. Mr Cornwell reminisced about the stage on which most of his characters fretted their hour, the Cold War. And he vigorously affirmed that there is still work for spies to do. A man may commit many an error, but he does not poke his profession in the eye.

My brushes with the world of espionage have been few, but I can remember the lunch. It took place in the late-Eighties in the dining room of a dingy office block somewhere in Southwark. The head of M16, the genial Sir Colin McColl, was concerned that a series of spy scandals was revealing too much about his service — rarely to its credit — and damaging staff morale. He was discussing with ministers whether to go public, or in the jargon, "to avow". The fiction of his non-existence was unsustainable. The CIA had gone for avowal, and won Brownie points with Congress and lots more money. But how much to avow? Names and addresses? Budgets? Past operations?

Good lord, I replied, surely nothing of the sort. The politicians will rumble you. Open a window on this tiny little place and you know what parliamentary committee will be round your neck, demanding persons and papers, budget cuts and reports on the Falklands and Iraq. You cannot be half secret. M16

was like the monarchy. Damage the mystique and you are done for.

My hosts were most upset. Like their comrades at M15, they were rather looking forward to going public. They could say who they were at parties. They could review spy books for *The Spectator* and perhaps go on *Any Questions?* They could cut a dash before a Commons select committee. I stuck to my guns. Read Machiavelli: the power of advice is in inverse proportion to the mystery of its source. Stay secret or you will become just another policeman.

Within a couple of years, M16 had "come out" as the Secret Intelligence Service (SIS), and moved into a sumptuous palace by the river at Vauxhall. The head of M15 appeared on *Any Questions?* The SIS's budget has been cut, its numbers reduced and it now races round Whitehall like Del Boy, asking for any work going. It will uncover terrorists, bust drug-dealers, unhack computers or spike superguns, for a price. This somehow lacks the imprimatur of the defence of Western civilisation.

We shall never know whether the profession of spy shortened or prolonged the Cold War. The military-industrial complex grossly overestimated the Soviet military threat, and its secret arm must take some responsibility for that. Espionage was institutionalised alarmism. The Cold War, at least after 1985, was conducted by politicians largely for domestic consumption. I agree with Mr Cornwell's concern that we made the same mistake towards the ailing Soviet empire in the 1980s as was made towards Germany after the Great War. A nation that should have been quietly helped back from the brink of chaos was crushed, impoverished, crippled and humiliated. Russia and its satellites are now prey to every imaginable horror, probably offer-

ing a greater threat to the West than under communism.

My impression is that, during the Cold War, spying was a game acceptable to public opinion. But one that delivered far below expectation. Now that the war is over, spying against states with whom we are not at war is less acceptable, yet is more likely to be of value. I would happily pay to penetrate the cadres of Arab terrorism, to know who is selling arms to whom, which airline is risky, which economy is about to crash, which dictator is on the ropes and which will last for ever — if anyone can tell me.

Whether the SIS is the best equipped to offer this service is moot. Others, such as news media, could also bid for the contract. The catalogue of woes lately blighting Western Intelligence lengthens by the month: the failure to predict the Kuwait invasion; the failed destabilisation of Iraq; the failed containment of Slobodan Milosevic; the lunacy of calling a medicine factory in Sudan a threat to world security; the disastrous abuse of the UN weapons inspectors. I assume that British Intelligence is responsible for ten years of spin that President Saddam Hussein is "on his last legs". Or if not, the spies have clearly lost their ability to persuade the Cabinet. Either way we are getting poor value for money.

The spy's oldest whinge, to which Le Carré devoted his early talent, is that gathering intelligence is far easier than getting those in power to believe it. The greatest recent failing was the Argentinian invasion of the Falklands. But that was as much due to the fact that the Cabinet in 1982 did not want to know anything that might undermine its defence cuts. The same blind spot operated a year later when Washington refused, against all intelligence, to believe that the Russians had shot

down a Korean airliner by accident. The White House had decided on a confrontation, and that was that. In 1990, nobody wanted to hear that Iraq might invade Kuwait, so nobody did.

Yet if spies cannot formulate their messages in a way that a government will listen, how will they validate their role? Espionage is the dark corner of the democratic garden, where sunlight never shines. In the past, government has felt free to pay for espionage and to disregard it. Now that the spies have gone public, they will be under increasing pressure to deliver on their £150 million budget. They must account for their mistakes, or the part they have played in the mistakes of government.

The lesson of arms-for-Iraq and Sierra Leone is that all those involved in public security must now watch every step. They are all civil servants. In his book, *The New Spies*, James Adams depicts the future spy as applying for prior approval from an oversight committee, reporting every move to an in-house lawyer and keeping chits that he has broken no international protocol. After Scott, he must certainly do nothing that might upset a hypersensitive British judge. He is more vulnerable to a race discrimination charge than to a Walther bullet. In other words his secrecy and possibly his service will be compromised.

If the "secret" and the "service" in SIS are at a discount, what is left? The answer is intelligence. In a world of small wars, do-good intervention and narcissist politicians, cool human assessment is more crucial than ever. Whence it comes may be moot: from the sharp-eyed journalist, the shrewd academic, the entrepreneur, the hacker or the spy. But the wisdom in spy circles is that "sight" is out and "humint" is back: the Joe on the ground not the boffin in earphones. The way to get through to dumb politicians is not with sexy intercepts, but with convincing analysis. Assessment is the future of the spy.

So yes, George, the Circus needs you. That Robin Cook is dropping dangers every minute and it's all hands on deck. Britain could soon be fighting three wars at once. All that stands between the nation and disaster is intelligence.

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Simon Jenkins



Wrong Way

STIFF gins in the clubhouse at Royal Lytham and St Annes, as locals threaten to unveil the Les Dawson Way. Plans to honour the chummy comedian — a yokel who met his mother-in-law in the sky in 1993 — with a new road link to the MSS have split the town.

Dawson's widow, Tracy, backs the council's plan, as does local sort Bill Beaumont and the mayor, Anne Smith: "Les did a great deal for this town."

Less earthy sorts are quaking: "I just don't think his humour is very as," suggests one. A sample goes: "My mother-in-law said she would dance on my grave, so I told her I'm being buried at sea." Lytton Goodwin, Royal Lytham's club secretary, says: "I would much prefer the Seve Ballesteros Way."

OUR grandest theatrical dame grumbles that she is not offered sexy roles. Judi Dench, 65, says she is overlooked for parts enjoyed by a recent co-star, Gwyneth Paltrow (both below): "I would like to play someone glamorous. I don't know why I get dragon roles which are excellent to play, but I'm nothing like that in life. It would be great to dress up in a nice dress with make-up and look like a sex symbol for once."



■ FRANK DOBSON is chasing nurses in Moscow. With platoon of Filipina "angels" marching on to our wards (recruits at a Surrey hospital have been sent to learn English after puzzlement over terms such as "kicking the bucket"), Dobson's yawning recruitment gap is to be plugged: my man with the MIG missile has been asked to find 2,000 fresh young Muscovites to slip into starched whites. They are being tempted by free flights, visas, beds, £12,000 per year and freedom from the medical demands of Boris Yeltsin. I'm just a little worried about the Russian bedside manner.

MAJOR RONALD FERGUSON is back in the saddle: the playboy polo player is to sell a virility drug. Fergie's father is to make a video promoting a ginseng cocktail to be shown in America. "Yanks are wild about him," I am assured. After his late-night visits to the Wigmore Club some years ago, I am sure they are not alone.

■ BERYL BAINBRIDGE wants regional accents "wiped out". The author's final solution stems from her view that accents sound stupid. The Islington-sounding Liverpoolian wants elocution lessons for all pupils, saying she succeeded only by sounding southern.

Coming in for a "lorra" criticism: Cilla Black, whose Liverpoolian accent sounds "fake".

EVERYTHING'S COMING UP ROSES — TROUBLE IS IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE BARLEY!



A THEATRICAL knight on the town. Sir Ian McKellan relaxed after playing in *The Tempest* with karaoke in a Leeds pub. "There was no George Formby music, but it was jolly anyway," he tells me.

■ FUN in the sun, by Jack Straw. My merrisab tells me that when the Home Secretary popped over to India for new year, he held up in his room at the Lake Palace Hotel (William Hague's honeymoon suite): "I felt sorry for him. His wife sat by the pool enjoying herself. He stayed in his room, emerging rarely and in formal dress for dinner."

A PHONEY war to be Liberal Democrat leader has begun three months before official battle is allowed to commence. Charles Kennedy, I hear, has made the bespectacled Paul Keetch, MP, his campaign organiser. Meanwhile, the dashing Don Foster, reckoned to be a rival by some, has hired a 24-year-old City high-flyer to co-ordinate his fight. Poor Paddy.

JASPER GERARD

'When Ann Widdecombe met Uri Geller, each was totally gobsmacked by the other — you could have heard a pin bend'

Some of you may find it a mite spooky that, in all the many hundreds of tête-à-têtes which we have shared over the years, I have never once mentioned that I was a bit clairvoyant. You are the some of, of course, who are yourselves a bit clairvoyant, and who have murmured, at this moment or that, out of the blue, "something tells me he's a bit clairvoyant". The rest of you have never given it a second thought, because, lacking the gift, you never gave it the first one; so it is to you in particular that I address myself today, partly because you are the ones who need convincing, partly because the others already know what I am going to say.

I am going to say that, for several days now, you have been wondering about Ann Widdecombe. Uncanny, eh? It gets better. I can even tell you what you were wondering. You were

wondering whether, when last week she declared to the new Register of MPs' Interests that she had been given a bent BBC teaspoon, the Shadow Health Secretary was simply being scrupulously honest, or whether she was, less simply, deploying honesty unscrupulously in order to wind everybody up. Well, I am here to do it because I was there to do it, on the afternoon of December 10, 1998, in the hospitality suite of BBC Pebble Mill in Birmingham, whither the dramatic personae involved had convened to play *Call My Bluff*, and thus where Miss Widdecombe met, for the first time, Mr Uri Geller.

It was, in every sense, a magic moment. As their team captain, I had fallen to me to introduce my two illustrious guests to one another, and I have to say that nothing less than the aptly

metaphysical John Donne will suffice to describe what happened next: their eye-beams twisted, and did thuddle their eyes, upon one double string. More astonishing yet, each was, quite literally, gobsmacked by the other: eerily enveloped, the two people in the country hitherto least likely to be lost for words, found not a one.

You could have heard a pin bend. And then, uncannily — until you recall that he is as clairvoyant a cove as you can shake a Ouija board at — Mr Geller divined precisely what Miss Widdecombe was thinking, picked up a BBC teaspoon from the table beside them, held it aloft between thumb and forefinger, and made it droop.

Whereupon the Shadow Secre-

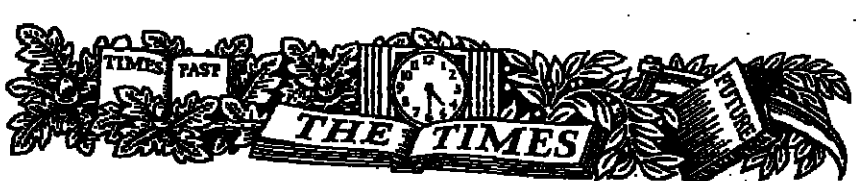
etary slowly raised her own thumb and forefinger — I cannot swear they were not trembling gently took the buckled cutlery, and placed it reverently in her handbag. After which she no less gently took, by the elbow, Mr Geller himself, sat beside him on a sofa strategically placed to serve momentous historical happenings, and listened while he talked. And how he talked! And how she listened! They might have been Othello and Desdemona, he rabbiting on about anthropophagi and men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders, she letting herself be bowled over by his wondrous stories into helpless captivity. I did not, of course, eavesdrop on all that was said, but from the disparate fragments



Alan Coren

gleaned as I refilled a cup or offered egg-and-cress, I could sense that a self-portrait was emerging, despite his fabled modesty, of a man of both great spiritual depth and great material achievement, a man able to read and memorise ten books in a morning before transporting himself across the planet in nano-seconds to heal the inexplicably sick, pluck a global corporation from the red, dowse unerringly for oil and bawdies, adjust an errant satellite, and all this without first dashing into a phonebox to move his Y-fronts to the outside.

Okay, you say, you claim to be a bit of a clairvoyant, so what was the wide-eyed Miss Widdecombe thinking while Uri was telling her all this? Okay, I reply, she was thinking: here is an internationally recognised byword for



THE FIRST TEST

Excess pensions baggage and the 'European social model'

Tony Blair delivered a stirring sermon in Milan yesterday to his Socialist eurozone partners, pleading with them to graft the dynamism of America's enterprise culture onto the "European social model". This is an ambitious transplant operation he has in mind. For French Socialists, it is an article of faith that Anglo-Saxon capitalism is a menace to the humane politics of "social cohesion". So it is for Oskar Lafontaine, Germany's Finance Minister. And this week's abrupt adjournment of the EU negotiations on agricultural reform underlines how little happens without the backing of these two countries.

The Prime Minister's words were intended, however, for an audience beyond the EU socialist leaders gathered to launch a joint platform for elections to the European Parliament. Whatever hopes Mr Blair may entertain of persuading the European Left to embrace politically difficult and ideologically suspect reforms, it is even more important to him to convince British voters that enough change is on the way to guarantee the euro's success. For without proof that the eurozone is overhauling bankrupt pensions systems, cutting taxes and public spending and removing the welfare disincentives to work, he dare not contemplate a British referendum on joining EMU.

But Mr Blair has a problem. The more he insists on "the fundamental weaknesses of the European economy", the more he calls not only for new policies but for a revolution in the eurozone's political culture, the deeper the gulf between Continental and British, let alone American, thinking and practice is seen to be. Three key indicators provide a crude measurement of the welfare state's grip on eurozone prospects: public spending as a proportion of GDP, overall tax levels and the weight of social security contributions. Eurozone public spending last year averaged 49.1 per cent, a fifth higher than British levels and nearly a third above that of America. It is no coincidence that, in high-spending Germany and France, civil service administration, excluding education, health and social work, accounts for 9 per cent of those currently employed — half as many again as in Britain — or that in most of the eurozone, the number of people

working fulltime in the private sector is lower than it was 20 years ago.

The difference in tax burdens between the eurozone's 43.4 per cent and Britain's 38.6 per cent may appear less dramatic, and both are a world away from America's 31.5 per cent. But it can take years to shrink public spending enough to bring taxes down by only 2 or 3 per cent; and on most projections, the tax gap between Britain and the eurozone is set to rise, not fall.

To see why, look at the relative burden of social security contributions — 9.4 per cent of GDP in the US, only 7.7 per cent in Britain, but 17 per cent in euroland and nearly 20 per cent in Germany and France. The main cause of this disparity is the, for once aptly named, "pensions timebomb". A properly funded system requires reserves of at least 30 months wages for each person covered — more where, as in Italy, France and Germany, workers can retire earlier on full pensions than they do in Britain. In Italy and France, current reserves are just over a month. Britain's future costs are under control; but in every eurozone country except Ireland, they are set on a steeply rising curve. By 2040, when there will be twice as many pensioners relative to the working-age population, they will absorb 14.3 per cent of GDP in France, 18.4 per cent in Germany and 21.4 per cent in Italy. These books will not balance without a mix of cuts in pensions, higher contributions and general taxes, steep compensating cuts in public spending, large transfers from the relatively solvent eurozone countries or — the nuclear option — inflation. All will be unpopular. Reform has barely begun.

For the eurozone, the implications are financial instability, growing budgets and still higher taxes. In some areas there is patchy change. In Germany, the Economics Ministry is frustrated by what officials call "the ayatollah tendency" around Herr Lafontaine. Some French bureaucrats now think of liberalisation, but their ministers will not talk about it: the Italians and Dutch do a bit of both. But pensions reform and tax reductions are indispensable to the eurozone's viability, tests that must be met before Britain could think of joining. Yet on pensions, Mr Blair had not a single word to say in Milan. This is simply not serious.



DEATH IN UGANDA

A successful African state with very dangerous borders

The ugly deaths of eight Western tourists, including four British citizens, in Uganda yesterday are a salutary reminder of the dangers of what is now modern travel. The responsibility lies not with the company concerned, the Foreign Office, or the Ugandan authorities, but squarely with the Interahamwe militias, now resident in the Congo, who were the cause of more than one million deaths in Rwanda almost five years ago. This incident, coming soon after the loss of three British lives in Yemen, may lead some to conclude that they should not stray so far from home. That would be unfortunate. Aspiring tourists should still be ambitious, but also selective.

It is particularly sad that Uganda should witness such an atrocity. That country has been one of Africa's few success stories in recent times. It has witnessed an economic transformation since a wave of reform was initiated by Yoweri Museveni 12 years ago. In 1987, economic growth was barely 1 per cent and inflation was at 256 per cent. A decade later both numbers stood at approximately 7 per cent. President Museveni has also sought to build substantial regional co-operation through such innovations as the Common Market for East and South Africa and the East African Co-operation and Development strategy. Kampala has become one of Africa's safer capitals.

These economic advances have been held back by politics. This part of East Africa is marked by colonial boundaries that cut across traditional tribal lines, thus providing natural constituencies for various defeated and insurgent troops from several nations. The current Ugandan Government is opposed by, among others, the

West Nile Bank Front, the Allied Democratic Forces (who are neither allied nor democratic), and the remnants of other rebel organisations, such as the Lord's Resistance Army, and even a few remaining admirers of Idi Amin. These factions are usually based across the border in the Congo and are often supported by Sudan.

In the latest twist these armies have found themselves in alliance with Hutu exiles from Rwanda and the administration of Laurent Kabila in the Congo. This is especially paradoxical as President Kabila could never have achieved power in the first place without the backing of Rwanda and Uganda. Mr Kabila has proved utterly incapable of either building a broad consensus for his own rule in Kinshasa or preventing others from using his country as a base for armed operations. Until this situation is resolved, the borders in this part of Africa will remain perilous places.

That is especially true for tourists, and for British visitors in particular. London and Washington are perceived as sympathetic to the Tutsi governments of Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda, while the Hutus have traditionally fallen within the French sphere of influence. If there is a wider lesson to be drawn, however, it is in the long shadow still cast by the Interahamwe over the area. In 1994 the West refused to act against, at first even to acknowledge, the extraordinary genocide in Rwanda — the worst action of its kind since the Second World War. Those who died in the Bwindi Park have been, in a sense, the victims of the past indifference of outsiders. It will not help Uganda however, if tourists decide to boycott the country completely.

ROYAL BEEFEATER

A Prince strikes a blow for common sense

The Prince of Wales picked over a bone of contention this week when he sampled a banned cut of beef in a Newport hotel. But he appeared unconcerned by any controversy he aroused. "I am only sorry that so many of you have had to wait, building up an enormous appetite whilst having to look at this huge hunk of roast beef," he said to the farmers and civic dignitaries assembled round the offending rib. "Shortly you will be able to taste it like I did," he continued. "It's absolutely delicious."

The Prince's gesture spoke louder than political debate. The time has come for the Government's ludicrous ban on beef on the bone to be given the chop. The public may have found it understandable more than a year ago when Jack Cunningham, then Minister for Agriculture, first imposed it. Emerging bloodied from a bout with BSE, he could not afford to underestimate any risk to public health and needed to court European Union opinion. A new Labour administration sought to dissociate itself from the ditherings of its Tory predecessor

by maintaining the ban as proof of its commitment to consumer interests.

In the wake of initial worries, closer scientific investigation has proved that the chances of contracting BSE from beef on the bone are rather less than negligible. The likelihood of being struck by lightning is about 60 times greater. So why should farmers, butchers and gourmards alike, their lives already put out of joint by the BSE crisis, be further burnt by this ban? The Government should have made a clean cut with its excessively cautious policy several months ago.

The Prince of Wales carved a clear path when he accepted and enjoyed a choice morsel of banned meat this week. Unlike John Gummer, criticised for feeding his daughter a burger, the Prince is a cut above the political fray. His decision to partake was purely personal. But if beef on the bone makes a feast fit for a Prince, then surely common sense might safely follow his example. The beef on the bone ban should now be ended. Arise Sirloin.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

A role for Britain in Europe without joining EMU?

From Sir John Hoskyns

Sir, Of course we must stay out of EMU. But if we succeed in that, we simply arrive at the next question. Is it really possible for Britain, one of the four big economies of Europe, and the fifth largest in the world, to remain forever as a member of the EU while being outside its most important project — political union?

Does anyone, outside the Government and Clarke, Heseltine, etc, think, or pretend to think, that we can join EMU and not in the end sign up to Europe's statist fiscal-legal-welfare-employment menu in its entirety?

It may be that the Government has concluded, behind closed doors, that such a position, as euroland's permanently grumbling appendix, is unsustainable for more than a few years, while withdrawal from the EU is now not merely hazardous and difficult, but legally and technically impossible, however much the electorate might one day want it. This would explain the relentless propaganda campaign to persuade the public (consistently misled by politicians for the last 30 years) that joining EMU is what they want, rather than what they're going to have to accept.

Debate about EMU will be difficult if mention of withdrawal from the EU is not permitted.

I have more confidence in Britain's imperfect arrangements than I do in euroland's out-of-touch politicians, undemocratic institutions, dubious electoral systems and legal processes, financial corruption, creative accounting, secrecy, administrative incompetence, mercantile instincts, foreign-policy confusion, institutionalised animosity towards the United States and Charlemagne-flavoured delusions of empire.

Ever since the arrival of Jacques Delors in Brussels in 1985, the accelerating drive to political integration seems to have been the cause of this growing European sickness, not its cure.

Is this great project really Britain's cup of tea? If we can't change it for the better, will it change us for the worse? Is it perhaps already doing so? Sooner or later we will have to talk about these things. It is called "thinking the unthinkable" and has been rather successful for both Labour and Conservative parties over the past 20 years.

I am glad that Mary Ann Sieghart (article, "Young, free and anti-single currency", February 26) is sceptical about EMU. I, too, am fed up with EMU opponents being caricatured as swivel-eyed xenophobes. Opponents of ERM in 1989, and proponents of trade union reform in 1979, or privatisation in 1983, felt the same. At present, those who dare to think

beyond the EMU issue receive similar treatment.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN HOSKYN,
Windrush, Great Waddingfield,
Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 0RZ
February 28.

From Lord Tebbit

Sir, Mary Ann Sieghart is absolutely right. Those who wish to see the European Union collapse should support economic and monetary union. The stresses it will impose are more likely to destroy the European Union amidst a welter of recrimination and extreme nationalism than to unite the member states in a stable and prosperous state.

This general argument has also been made by myself and others such as Lord Lawson. Like John Major, I would oppose British subordination within a European state and since that is the inevitable consequence of entry into EMU, like Mary Ann Sieghart, I oppose British entry.

What should worry Mary Ann Sieghart, as it worries me, is just how the European Union could adjust to allow Britain to be a co-signatory of the Treaty of Rome with a federal republic consisting of a dozen or more other European states.

Yours faithfully,
TEBBIT,
House of Lords,
March 1.

From Mr Shahid A. Juned

Sir, Peter Riddell is to be congratulated on his objective analysis of EMU (March 1). The pick-and-choose scenario pursued by Lord Owen and his allies is not compatible with being at the heart of Europe. It will put Britain in a "half-in, half-out" situation with no influence in formulating key economic policies.

Yours faithfully,
SHAHID A. JUNED,
15 Fenwick Close,
Alcester, Warwickshire B49 6JZ,
March 1.

From Mr Idris R. Francis

Sir, President Thomas Jefferson said, almost 200 years ago (long enough, one would have thought, for word to have reached Westminster), that any nation which gives up its freedom in pursuit of economic advantage deserves to lose both. This is why the UK Independence Party fights not just against the undoubted economic dyslexia of EMU, but for our freedom and sovereignty under laws and policies debated in English at Westminster by those whom we elect and remove.

BMJ's celebration of sex and health

From the Editor of the British Medical Journal

Sir, I share some of the "despair" of Dr Christopher Wiltshire (letter, February 27) that the *British Medical Journal*, "that august organ of the medical establishment", could not publish sexually explicit pictures without giving a warning on the cover. But I think that we did the right thing.

There is no problem with publishing horrible pictures of genitalia covered in warts and syphilitic chancres. The problem comes with erotic pictures that celebrate sexuality. Many doctors see these as "gratuitous" and seven have written to me to complain. One asked to have his journal stopped while the series continued.

We published the erotic pictures for two main reasons. Firstly, we did so because our series was on sexual health not disease. We wanted to encourage doctors to think positively about sexuality, recognise the fundamental importance of sexuality in health, and feel as comfortable talking to their patients about orgasms as about bleeding piles.

Secondly, we wanted to demonstrate to doctors the enormously wide range of normal sexuality. Doctors have too often in the past made the mistake of providing treatment for what is perfectly normal sexual behaviour.

Instead of despairing at the warnings on the cover Dr Wiltshire should rejoice in the fact that we published the pictures at all. We certainly would not have done so ten years ago.

(Your readers might like to know that on our website the sex articles receive around 25,000 hits a week, whereas some others receive only 300. Warnings are good for business.)

Yours in celebration of sexuality,
RICHARD SMITH,
Editor, BMJ,
BMA House,
Tavistock Square, WC1H 9JR,
March 1.

Origins of the kilt

From Mr Aiken Fyall

Sir, I am sorry to disillusion my fellow Scots regarding our nationalistic claims to the kilt reports and leading article, February 27.

Hugh Trevor-Roper, writing in *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge University Press, paperback edition, 1997), attributes its creation to an English Quaker from Furness, Lancashire, circa 1730.

Thomas Rawlinson, an iron-master, became aware of the restrictions on work-rate of the cumbersome, all-enveloping *brecan* or belted plaid, worn by the Highlanders at his iron-ore furnace at Glengarry. He commissioned a regimental tailor in Inverness to design a more practical garment. The result was the *felie beg*, *philibeg* or "small kilt".

As ceremonial dress, the kilt was popularised by Sir Walter Scott while masterminding the state visit to Edinburgh of George IV in 1827, and later by Prince Albert. To quote Trevor-Roper, "the fashion spread", to be taken up by "Anglicised Scottish peers, improving gentry, well-educated Edinburgh lawyers, and prudent merchants of Aberdeen".

May we now expect the beginning of the new millennium to be brightened by a vivid splash of kilned colour, worn not only by the Scottish parliament but by their counterparts in Cardiff and Westminster?

Yours sincerely,
AITKEN FYALL,
22 Bryn y Glyn,
Bronwydd,
Carmarthen SA33 6JB,
june@fyall22.freeserve.co.uk
March 1.

Right to roam

From Mr Peter B. Brown

Sir, Kate Ashbrook, chairman of the Ramblers' Association Access Committee (letter, February 27), maintains that 85 per cent of the population (which must be approximately 40 million people) want freedom to roam.

Funny that: every day my wife and I go for walks in the countryside, always using public rights of way, which are often across open land and through fields, yet very rarely do we meet any other walkers. Where are these millions?

Yours faithfully,
PETER B. BROWN,
27 Isles Court, Ramsbury,
Marlborough, Wiltshire SN8 2QW,
February 27.

The demise of denim

From Mrs Joan Bosonnet

Sir, I note that there is a drop in the demand for and manufacture of jeans (report, February 24).

It seems to be an era which I have lived through without becoming part of. I am 64 and have never had a pair of jeans.

I have never disapproved of them, and my son and daughters wear them all the time. I just felt they were rather cardboardy things.

Yours faithfully,
JOAN BOSONNET,
The Old House Cottage,
Pyrford Road, Pyrford GU22 5UE,
February 25.

ITV's success

From the Chief Executive of ITV

Sir, With a grand sweep of his pen, William Rees-Mogg ("We haven't a prayer", March 1) dismisses the efforts of the Church, the Labour Party and ITV to be relevant in *fin de siècle* Britain.

I'm saddened that Lord Rees-Mogg can find nothing in the ITV schedule that pleases him. I suspect he's not trying all that hard.

Audience research may be the dunce's answer to the impressions of the good and the great but it indicates that despite the immense competition (and I agree — the immense pressure to aim low), ITV is succeeding in presenting an array of programmes that is finding favour with the whole nation, the highly educated included.

On Wednesday the Lords will debate the future of public service broadcasting. I hope their Lordships will acknowledge that whilst ITV does not try to flatter an intellectual elite its public service is expressed through a mighty breadth of diversity, an incomparable regional service and massive investment in original British production.

Yours faithfully,
RICHARD EYRE,
Chief Executive, ITV,
200 Gray's Inn Road, WC1X 8HF,
March 2.

News at 6.30

From Mr Peter T. Hughes, QC

Sir, May I suggest to all those who share my sense of bereavement at the loss of *News at Ten* with Mr Trevor McDonald (report, March 2) that they record the replacement ITN news bulletin at 6.30pm and play it at 10pm.

Yours faithfully,
PETER T. HUGHES,
3 Paper Buildings,
Temple, EC4Y 7EU,
March 2.

Dressing the part

From Mr Patrick Devine

Sir, Jane Shilling's dilemma ("I haven't a clue what to wear now I work at home", February 26) is easily solved for us few men fortunate enough to partake in the school run. A tie indicates one is going on to one's workplace while an open collar indicates other activities for the day ahead.

Yours faithfully,
PATRICK DEVINE,
Falcon, La Couture,
St Peter Port, Guernsey GY1 2DZ,
February 27.

Beer trade under threat

From the Chairman of the Brewers and Licensed Retailers Association and others

Sir, As the Chancellor of the Exchequer ponders the finer points of the forthcoming Budget (report, March 1), let him consider that leaving the level of excise duty on beer where it is, let alone introducing another increase, will be bad news for the British beer drinker, the British pub, and all who support them.

It will be good news in the French Treasury, among French businesses and, in this country, to well organised gangs of criminals.

Beer duty in the UK is 33p a pint compared to 5p in France. Over 1.5 million pints a day are brought into the UK and Customs and Excise estimate that three quarters of this is illegally resold without paying British duty. On the eve of the 21st century we have successfully revived the 18th-century crime of smuggling on a large scale. This is causing pubs to close

Dangers to drivers

From Mr J. Malcolm Gordon

Sir, You report (February 27) that the new Highway Code warns of the dangers of using mobile phones and high-tech equipment while driving, but stops short of a total ban which safety campaigners such as the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents (RoSPA) had pressed for.

Since it is suggested by RoSPA that danger exists up to ten minutes after a call whilst people are mulling over their conversation, has any similar research been done on the effect on drivers' concentration of listening to radio plays, quiz shows or, especially, pop music at mind-numbing (and car-damaging) sound levels?

Yours faithfully,
J. MALCOLM GORDON,
4 Warners Avenue,
Hoddeston,
Hertfordshire EN11 8LR,
February 27.

Royal beef

From Mr A. Guy Harding

Sir, What luxury to live with no greater worry than whether the Prince of Wales may have been irresponsible in thanking his hosts for a meal (report, March 2).

Yours faithfully,
GUY HARDING,
The Dovecot,
Church Street, Olney,
Buckinghamshire MK46 4AD,
March 2.

Dr Jenner's cow

From Mr Robin Otter

Sir, You reproduce today the Royal Mail's millennium stamp featuring Peter Brook's delightful representation of a cow to celebrate Dr Edward Jenner's discovery of the smallpox vaccine.

It may be of interest that the particular cow Dr Jenner used was a Gloucester, now alas a rare breed but a most beautifully marked red-brown cow, with a distinctive white stripe on the back (finchback), white tail and belly. The actual hide is displayed in the Gloucester Folk Museum and Gloucester cattle can be seen at many venues, particularly the annual Three Counties Show at Malvern in June.

Yours faithfully,
ROBIN OTTER (Chairman,
Gloucester Cattle Society, 1973-75),
The Grange, Kemerton,
Tewkesbury GL20 7JE,
March 1.

From Mr Beverley Morgan

Sir, I suggest that the cut of Welsh beef enjoyed by the Prince of Wales on St David's Day be named Charles-lebone forthwith.

Yours faithfully,
BEVERLEY MORGAN,
9 Winterskote Gardens,
Mill Hill, NW7 2RA,
March 2.

Letters for publication may be faxed to 0171-782 5046, e-mail to: letters@the-times.co.uk

NEWS

Safari killers chose British victims

Hutu rebels who bludgeoned and hacked to death eight tourists after kidnapping them from a gorilla safari camp attached notes to the bodies saying "Americans and British, we don't want you on our land."

The attackers were specifically looking for Britons and Americans when they raided the Bwindi Park in Uganda. The attackers told the French to stand aside. Four Ugandans were killed and 14 English-speaking tourists were then marched into the jungle, where the eight met their deaths. Pages 1-3

Survivor tells of jungle murders

A survivor of the kidnappings gave a graphic account of being forced to march nine hours through the jungle and seeing the bodies of five of his companions who had been hacked to death with machetes. Page 1

Dome doubts

Labour MPs will today seek guarantees that the Government will not bail out the £750 million Millennium Dome after a report raised doubts about its ability to pay its way. Page 4

Plea for life

A woman told the Old Bailey how she kissed the boots of a German soldier as she pleaded for her life. As she begged Anthony Sawoniuk, the man accused of helping to carry out Nazi genocide, did nothing to help. Page 5

Bus boy 'murdered'

A boy of eight was "befriended, groomed and seduced" before being murdered by a bus driver who had picked him up on his regular route, a jury heard. The driver gave Jamie Lavis special treats during the journey. Page 5

Killer sunbeds

Sunbeds can kill, the Health Education Authority declared. With up to three million people using them every year, the authority says that sunbeds could be responsible for a very high incidence of the most dangerous form of skin cancer. Page 6

Drummer's £600,000

Tony McCarroll, the drummer who was sacked by Oasis as the rock group achieved success in 1995, won a £600,000 settlement yesterday. Page 7

MPs told of nation's hidden treasures

Owners of national treasures are reneging on pledges to open them up to the public in return for tax benefits. MPs will be told that in any one year just 15 per cent of properties are visited by the public. Some owners are making it difficult for people to view their property even though in the past 15 years some £760 million has been deferred in tax payments. Page 4

Islanders sue

Islanders from the Chagos archipelago in the Indian Ocean accused Britain of illegally sending them into poverty-stricken exile in order to turn their home over to American forces. Page 8

Public contest

League tables are to be drawn up to measure the performance of police, transport, social services, local government and other public services in a drive to increase standards. Page 10

Climbing star

Spiderman, like Batman and Superman before him, is destined for Hollywood. The humanoid with the webbed skin is to be the star of his own blockbuster with a budget of £125 million. Page 11

Euro worries

Fresh signs emerged of a widening economic gap among the nations of euroland, reinforcing worries over the single currency. Diverging inflation rates heightened concern that economies are moving out of step. Page 12

Leader steps down

Dem Demaci, the father figure of the Kosovo Liberation Army, stepped down as its political front man after regional commanders said they could no longer accept his headline stance, which is blocking peace plans for the province. Page 13



Formula One driver Johnny Herbert with the RAAF precision flying team over Melbourne before Sunday's first race of the season

BUSINESS

Growth falls: Renkoi Initial, the hygiene and pest control group, blamed a strong pound for shattering profits as one of the world's biggest business services companies missed its long-standing 20 per cent growth target. Page 21

HP split: Hewlett-Packard, one of the pioneers of California's Silicon Valley, announced plans to split into two companies. Page 21

Smokers rise: The number of cigarette smokers in the UK jumped by 500,000 or 5 per cent last year, according to Gallaher Group, Britain's biggest producer. Page 21

Markets: The FTSE 100 rose 40 to 6061.3. The pound rose 0.83 cents to \$1.6158 and 0.37p against the euro to 67.64p. The index rose to 1022 from 1016. Page 24

Football: Alex Ferguson is determined that no hint of complacency will contaminate his Manchester United team for their European Cup quarter-final against Internazionale. Page 40

Cricket: Geoff Allott, the New Zealand Noll, scored the longest nought in the game's history, lasting 101 minutes in the first Test against South Africa. Page 40

Athletics: Colin Jackson, in the fourteenth year of his senior career, is about to have his last crack at a world indoor championship, so he dare not fail. Page 38

Simon Barnes: The great hoo-ha about tobacco sponsorship is a great blind. Its effect is to cover up the West's vast cultural and fiscal investment in alcohol. Page 38



TOMORROW

IN THE TIMES

FILMS

Thandie Newton, left, and Kimberly Elise in *Beloved*, produced by and starring Oprah Winfrey

BOOKS

What has Martin Luther King left behind?

Cold cuts: How the discovery of ancient ice at the South Pole has led to a rethink of climate theories. Plus, Nigel Hawkes reports on the scientist combing rich lists for sponsors and protection for whales from man-made sounds. Page 14

Danger, stranger: Tour operators may reassure holidaymakers who book trips to risky areas that they will travel know about potential dangers. But are all operators being open enough about the risks? Page 15

Royal redoubt: While Covent Garden is still undergoing redevelopment the Royal Ballet has embarked on a tour of "bite-sized" new ballets. Page 29

Top of the world: In Shepherd's Bush Alanis Morissette has demonstrated the lyrical powers that have taken her to the very top of the world of pop. Page 30

Unfair: Since the Government last month introduced new limits on fair rent increases to help private tenants who have been facing high rises, landlords have been cursing. Why, then, are tenants also unhappy? Page 33

The more Washington seeks to broaden its agenda with Beijing, the more harshly China treats its democrats and dissidents. Americans will not support a policy of engagement and improved relations with China if the price is American inaction on human rights abuses. — *The New York Times*

Britain's role outside euro: *BMJ's* celebration of sex and health: threat to beer trade. Page 17

Preview: Clinical depression: *A Living Hell* (BBC2, 11.15pm). Review: *LA Stories*: Beguiling documentary about Brits who packed their laptops for Hollywood. Pages 38, 39

The first test

Tony Blair delivered a stirring sermon in Milan to his Socialist euro-zone partners, pleading with them to graft the dynamism of America's enterprise culture onto the "European social model". Page 17

Death in Uganda

Those who died in the Bwindi Park have been, in a sense, the victims of the past indifference of outsiders. It will not help Uganda though, it tourists decide to boycott the country completely. Page 17

Royal beefeater

The beef-on-the-bone ban should end. Arise Sirloin. Page 17

SIMON JENKINS

My impression is that, during the Cold War, spying was a game acceptable to public opinion. Now that war is over, spying against states with whom we are not at war is less acceptable, yet is more likely to be of value. Page 16

BRONWEN MADDOX

I love it when people complain that American culture is taking over the world. It hasn't even taken over the United States. Page 16

ALAN COREN

And then, uncannily — until you recall that he is as clairvoyant a cove as you can shake a Ouija board at — Mr Geller divined precisely what Miss Widdowson was thinking, picked up a teaspoon, and made it drop. Page 16

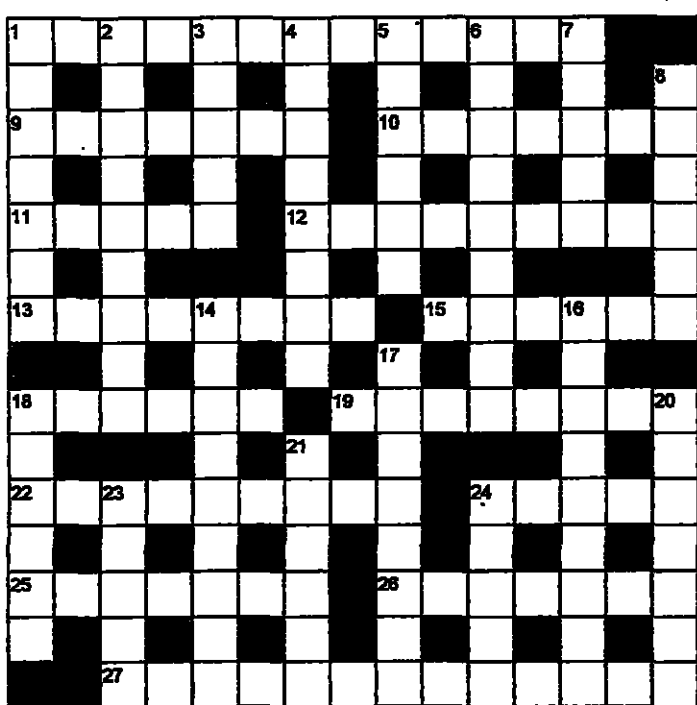
PETER RIDDELL

The accuracy of statistics are too important to be left to statisticians, or politicians. Page 10

Viscount Kemsley, newspaper proprietor, Sir Frederick Southworth, Chief Justice of Malawi, Bob Zachary, paediatrician, Miles Ponsonby, intelligence officer. Page 19

Britain's role outside euro: *BMJ's* celebration of sex and health: threat to beer trade. Page 17

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 21,041



ACROSS

- 1 Snack meals taken by advertising man, by the way (8,5).
- 9 Pack up fruit in cases (7).
- 10 Withdraw treatise on religious education (7).
- 11 Line one missed out in letter to Bar (5).
- 12 Gunners under scrutiny promise to provide admission later (4,5).
- 13 Transport route that could go into terminal (8).
- 15 Control supplies of commodity in a tight spot (6).
- 18 Don't recognise plant in row (6).
- 19 Reacting badly to wild garlic the French put in (8).
- 22 Tense claim to be practised? (9).
- 24 Up to 50 attached to special unit (5).

- 25 Motorway speed on Eastern ruler's territory (7).
- 26 Refined thief providing service with retiring personality (7).
- 27 Sauce with food a woman's made up before (8,5).

DOWN

- 1 Inside story of subscription scheme (7).
- 2 Dreadful thing disturbs birds (9).
- 3 Anger in the Cape (5).
- 4 Getting over danger I stupidly made (8).
- 5 One that flies higher than an eagle (6).
- 6 Vegetable oils, for example, I block (9).
- 7 A way to climb with exercises in hanging (5).
- 8 Author of horror story who feeds the flames (6).
- 9 Such characters appear to be threatening action (5,4).
- 10 Late-comers aren't scolded by hostess here (9).
- 11 It smooths things over as a flirt in a tight spot (6).
- 12 Rubbish left after excursion (6).
- 20 Select new key for instrument (7).
- 21 Gives way to delays (6).
- 23 Group of animals noisily poked noses in thus (5).
- 24 Fellow in section is in poor shape (5).

Solution to Puzzle No. 21,040

FLAVEN GUAMANT
EACH AHPDIL
RUCHE BRACHBALL
SEN SRIMTY
INDOOR WINDBAGS
MEPPOIN
MIDGE ALTIMETER
ONLEAE
NECTARINE CLEAN
ITNRAN
ROADSIDE MINIMS
LOTTRENE
DEMAOURAFIRE
GEIMNTCN
ENDORSE EVEREST

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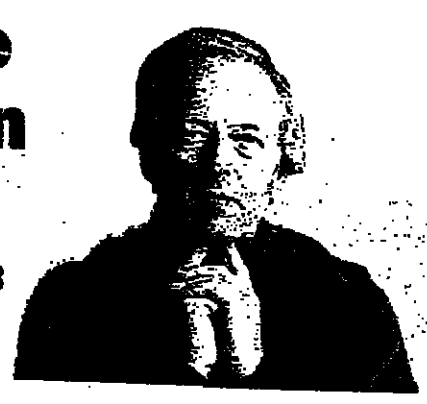
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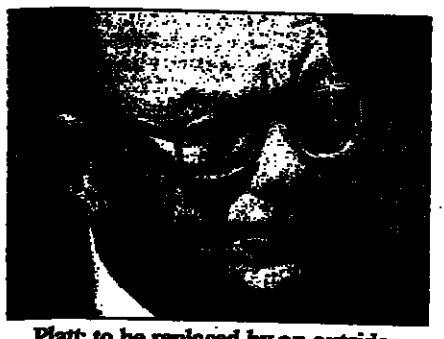
United's European obsession
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BUSINESS EDITOR Patience Wheatcroft

WEDNESDAY MARCH 3 1999

Hewlett-Packard chief goes in demerger



FROM OLIVER AUGUST IN NEW YORK
HEWLETT-PACKARD, the world's second-biggest computer manufacturer behind Compaq, yesterday announced the demerger of a key division and the departure of its executive chairman.
The \$75 billion (£47 billion) company, a Silicon Valley pioneer set up in 1939, is demerging its main hardware business from its subsidiary specialising in electronic testing equipment.
Lewis Platt, chairman, one of the computer industry's most powerful men, will step

down after the demerger, almost two years before he was due to retire. He is expected to be replaced by an executive from outside the company.
The comprehensive restructuring is aimed at boosting profitability at the troubled company and refocusing on Internet technology.
The demerger aims to take advantage of the huge investor interest in Internet-related stocks. Hewlett-Packard shares have lagged behind those of its competitors. The share price rose 17 per cent over the past two years while Compaq, the industry leader, went from \$15 to \$45.

Hewlett-Packard has struggled to maintain its high profitability in recent quarters as prices for computers and printers tumbled even though demand remained strong. Economic problems in Asia and Latin America are said to have contributed to the profitability problems.
Edward Barnholt, an executive vice-president, will become head of the measurements company. An outsider is expected to be hired for the top job at the hardware business, which earns 85 per cent of the company's revenues of about \$47 billion a year.
The first signs of a significant shake-up at Hewlett-Packard came last December when

the company cut pay for 2,400 managers by 5 per cent in an effort to curb costs. The three-month pay cut came at a time when salaries in the rest of the industry were rising steeply to retain scarce talent.
Analysts had expected the company to take drastic action after it announced earlier that profits had fallen 13 per cent, leading to a 15 per cent share price drop in a single week. The disappointing results marked the eighth time in nine quarters that Hewlett-Packard had remained below analysts' expectations.

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Rate cut hopes bolstered by fresh earnings data
By ALASDAIR MURRAY
ECONOMICS CORRESPONDENT

HOPES that the Bank of England will cut rates again were bolstered yesterday by the long-awaited publication of the average earnings figures, which confirmed that wage growth slowed markedly in the second half of last year.
The average earnings data were suspended last November after a series of revisions had altered the underlying path of wage growth during the first half of 1998, casting doubt on the Bank's decision to raise rates to 7.5 per cent in June.
The new data, which has been produced in the wake of two independent reports into the quality of the figures, show wage growth reaching a peak of 5.7 per cent in May 1998 and then falling back to 4.5 per cent in November and a provisional figure of 4.2 per cent in December.
Both the Confederation of British Industry and the Trades Union Congress seized on the data as evidence that the Bank's Monetary Policy Committee should make a further rate cut when its monthly meeting concludes today.
However, the City was less convinced that the data would swing the MPC's decision and the pound continued its recovery against the dollar and the euro.
The new pay figures would appear to vindicate the Bank's decision to raise rates last June. The data show that earnings growth was slightly stronger than originally suspected in the first half of last year and far in excess of the growth rate that emerged after the controversial data revisions last October.
Martin Weale, director of the National Institute for Economic and Social Research, who led the inquiry into the statistics, yesterday published his report stating that the Office for National Statistics made a number of key mistakes when it originally revised the data series last October. In particular, the sample sizes for financial intermediary companies and the private health sector were far too small, prompting excessive volatility in the overall data. However, the ONS still made the "regrettable and surprising" decision to publish the revised data despite Tim Holt, director of the ONS, raising serious doubts about its accuracy.

Rentokil punished for failure to hit targets

By ROBERT COLE
CITY CORRESPONDENT

NEARLY £1.5 billion was wiped off the value of the Rentokil Initial, the rat catching and toilet towel business service group yesterday.
The immediate cause of the stock market dismay was the news that Rentokil, whose chief executive, Sir Clive Thompson, is also President of Confederation of British Industry, failed to meet its long-held target of growing profits by 20 per cent a year.
The company said that the Asian economic crisis coupled with adverse movements in exchange rates to restrict growth in profits to 17.6 per cent. Earnings per share rose by 18.4 per

cent. However, if the impact of currencies is ignored, Rentokil bettered its ambitions.
Sir Clive said: "Against the targets we set ourselves this was a failure."
The self-imposed target has earned fabled status in the City and given Sir Clive the nickname "Mr 20 Per Cent".
It was only the second time in 17 years that Rentokil failed to grow profits and earnings per share by one fifth. The last time was in 1985.
Sir Clive said the group remained committed to its growth targets but said that it was unrealistic to expect the goals would be met year in and year out. He said yesterday that the targets were designed to be a "rallying cry" for employees.

"It is no longer a 50-year guarantee that Rentokil will lift profits by 20 per cent a year. But if we achieve the objective 80 per cent of the time we will still be doing pretty well," Sir Clive said.
He added that his pay for 1998 would reflect the less-impressive growth achieved last year. Sir Clive's bonus is linked to growth in earnings per share. "You will see when the annual report is published that my pay has gone down."
He also defended the company's record on payments to suppliers. He said that the criticism Rentokil has attracted for late payment of bills was unfair and he claimed that the company paid its suppliers in an average of 51 days when it

is paid by its customers in an average of 52 days.
Rentokil's corporate policy is to pay interest at base rate plus 1 per cent to suppliers who receive payment after the agreed time. Sir Clive said that the policy had been revised to ensure that if Rentokil fails to meet payment commitments to smaller companies with higher costs of borrowing, they would receive greater compensation.
Rentokil, which is renowned for its acquisitive nature, also said that it is prepared to return capital to shareholders. Sir Clive said that if opportunities to acquire or invest in its business do not arise it will either buy back shares, or make special dividend payments, or

pursue a policy of paying enhanced ordinary dividends.
For the year to December 31 pre-tax profits were £490 million, up from £417 million. Earnings per share were 12.22p up from 10.32p.
Sales grew by only 0.8 per cent to £2.9 billion. Rentokil said it had sacrificed some sales because it decided to increase prices to some customers. Across the group, pre-tax profit margins improved from 14.5 per cent to 16.9 per cent.
The total dividend was raised 20.9 per cent to 3.7p from 3.06p. The final payment is 2.63p. The shares closed down 48p - or 10.7 per cent - at 400 1/4p.

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GAVIN FOGG



Sir Clive Thompson, who said the company's self-imposed target of 20 per cent annual growth should now be seen as a rallying cry for its employees

Watchdog criticises loan cover

By GAVIN LUMSDEN

A GOVERNMENT initiative to encourage more homeowners to take out private loan insurance and not rely on state benefits if they fall ill or lose their jobs has come under attack from a leading consumer watchdog just seven days after it was launched.
Walter Merricks, the Insurance Ombudsman, yesterday raised the alarm over the Government's backing for a new form of mortgage payment protection which has given insurers and lenders free rein to set ambitious sales targets but has failed to insist on radical improvements in the way the cover is sold to the public.
Mortgage payment protection insurance (MPPI) and other policies designed to protect borrowers from accident, sickness and unemployment have become notorious in recent years for their cost and the complexity of their clauses.
Up to 40 per cent of the premiums paid by borrowers go to lenders which has led to accusations that the insurance is frequently being sold to people who do not need it.
Only last year a survey by the Association of British Insurers discovered that many staff at banks and building societies were breaking the industry's code of conduct by not explaining how the policies worked or what items were excluded from the cover.
Last week the ABI and Council of Mortgage Lenders sought to redress this by unveiling new minimum standards to which providers of MPPI must adhere in future.
Although the new benchmark should reduce the amount of variation between policies, it says nothing on the issue of cost or selling practice.
Despite these inadequacies, the Government has given lenders and insurers the go-ahead to target 55 per cent of new borrowers with the insurance.
This has alarmed Mr Merricks. He said yesterday: "There is a sales target but there is no target to improve compliance with the industry's code of conduct, which I find surprising."
In his latest annual report Mr Merricks describes the insurance industry

record on payment protection as "pretty dismal" over the past five years. The issue of compliance has become acute ever since the Government decided to replace statutory control of general insurance with a form of self-regulation under the Financial Services Authority.
Although payment protection insurance is not the biggest cause of complaints to the ombudsman's office - only 11 per cent of the 3,444 cases last year centred on loan insurance - Mr Merricks said that they tended to be fundamental grievances.
A government spokesman said that the sales process was an issue for the industry.

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Gallaher claims 5% rise in number of UK smokers
By PAUL ARMSTRONG

THE number of cigarette smokers in the UK jumped by 500,000, or 5 per cent, last year, according to startling research released yesterday by Gallaher Group, Britain's biggest maker of tobacco products.
Gallaher said it was the first increase recorded for more than 20 years and was a direct result of the sharp rise in cheaper, illegal cigarette imports by organised crime syndicates.
Peter Wilson, chairman, claimed the figures proved that the Government's strategy to reduce smoking by increasing tobacco taxes was failing. He said the UK's high excise rates were serving only to encourage the illegal importation of cigarettes from other parts of Europe, causing the Government to lose the ability to tax a growing slice of the tobacco market.
Gallaher, which boasts brands such as Benson & Hedges, Silk Cut and Mayfair, estimates that bootlegging soared in the past year to account for 8 per cent of the UK market compared with 3 per cent in 1997. This is in addition to legal, duty-free imports, which are believed to supply between 5 per cent and 7 per cent of the market.
Mr Wilson said the figures were compiled from Gallaher's own market research, which did not identify the ages of the new smokers.
He said bootlegging and the trend towards cheaper cigarettes were to blame for a 3.6 per cent fall in Gallaher's turnover to £4.25 billion last year.
Pre-tax profit fell 5.5 per cent to £318.6 million after a 59 per cent rise in the interest bill to £71.6 million. Though the results were in line with market expectations, Gallaher shares lost 24p to 447 1/4p.
Continued cost-cutting helped to lift operating margins from 38.6 per cent to 41.6 per cent. A final dividend of 13.7p was declared, taking the year's payout to 20.5p (19.25p).
Figures supplied by Gallaher show that a packet of cigarettes which sells in the UK for £3.64 returns tax of £2.88. This compares with France where tax of £1.50 is paid on a packet of cigarettes selling for £1.98.
A Gallaher spokesman said the company had informed the Government of the findings of the research and urged it to lower the tax in return for retaining market control. He said it was unclear whether the Government would continue its strategy of lifting the duty on tobacco each year by at least 5 per cent more than the inflation rate.

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Business Today

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Reaching the next level
Sony raises its game with new PlayStation
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FTSE 100: 6081.3 (+0.4)
Yield: 2.50%
FTSE All Share: 2785.55 (+1.48)
Nikkei: 13821.06 (-300.69)
New York: Dow Jones: 9410.35 (+85.57)
S&P Composite: 1245.98 (+9.50)

US DOLLAR
Life long gilt: 9.8% (5.9%)
Long bond: 5.82% (5.82%)
Yield: 5.82% (5.82%)

STERLING
3-month interbank: 5 1/4% (5 1/4%)
Life long gilt: 9.8% (5.9%)
Future (May): 115.73 (115.71)

NEW YORK
S. Index: 1,819.7 (1,807.3)
D. Index: 1,615.8 (1,607.8)
E. Index: 1,478.7 (1,470.5)
N. Index: 2,265.5 (2,249.8)
Y. Index: 194.35 (192.00)
S. Index: 102.2 (101.8)

DOLLAR
London: 1.0830 (1.0830)
S. Index: 1.4850 (1.4817)
Y. Index: 120.57 (119.80)
S. Index: 108.3 (108.2)

Tokyo close Yen 120.08
NORTH SEA OIL
Brent 15-day (May): \$11.08 (\$10.90)

GOLD
London close: \$288.15 (\$285.85)
* denotes midday trading prices
Exchange rates Page 22

BoS teams up with evangelist

By CAROLINE MERRELL

BANK of Scotland is to launch a joint venture in the US with the Rev Pat Robertson, the TV evangelist and Republican politician who campaigned for the impeachment of President Clinton.
The direct-banking operation is expected to be called the New Foundation Bank. It will have Mr Robertson as its chairman, although Bank of Scotland will hold a majority stake. The new bank will target the 55 million viewers of Mr Robertson's Christian Broadcasting Network. Mr Robertson, who has a vast business empire in the US, was earlier this year appointed a non-executive director of Laura Ashley, the UK retailer.
Peter Burt, Bank of Scotland chief executive, said the bank would concentrate initially on attracting deposits, though eventually it could offer credit cards and loans. "We need to see how big an inflow of funds we can get," he said.
Born-again banking, page 25

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NU sets aside £750m to cover annuities

BY MARIANNE CURPHEY
INSURANCE CORRESPONDENT

NORWICH UNION has set aside a total of £750 million to cover the cost of guaranteed pension annuities sold to customers up to 25 years ago.

The insurance company said yesterday that it had added £375 million to its annuity provisions last year, out of a with-profits fund of £27.5 billion. Successive interest rate

falls have forced insurers to set aside reserves to cover the cost of paying guaranteed rates.

The news came as NU unveiled an 11 per cent rise in operating earnings before tax to £716 million, against a pro-forma 1997 figure of £644 million, and an 8 per cent rise in pre-tax profit to £777 million.

Analysts were cheered by news that on the general insurance side, which accounts for 18 per cent of worldwide prof-

its, premium rate rises were beginning to stick. The bulk of NU's UK general insurance portfolio, which saw a small increase in operating earnings before tax to £129 million, is personal, motor and household business.

The rise in profit was achieved despite the storms and floods of 1998, which cost the group £20 million.

Richard Harvey, group chief executive, said NU put

up motor rates by between 5 and 7 per cent last year and hoped to continue the increases in 1999. He said this vindicated his decision to buy London & Edinburgh Insurance Group last November, a move that was criticised by bearish analysts. The acquired business reported a £3 million operating loss for the year.

Mr Harvey added: "London & Edinburgh satisfies our ambitions in general insurance.

We would love to go for something in the life sector but at the moment the only companies available are ones that are in trouble."

NU's worldwide life, pensions and investment operations achieved new business growth of 6 per cent in local currency terms, including an 8 per cent growth in the UK and a 9 per cent in local currency in Europe.

Operating earnings before

tax of UK life and pensions rose 7 per cent to £486 million (£453 million), and nearly doubled in Europe to £60 million (£32 million). International life business earnings fell to £18 million (£26 million).

Two million NU customers received windfall shares when the insurer demutualised in 1997 with 45 per cent of them still holding the stock.

Tempus, page 24

Gas-power stations hurt RJB profits

BY CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

DEEP COALMINING by Britain's biggest coal producer became a loss-maker last year as RJB Mining struggled with falling prices and high production costs.

Deep mines — the core of RJB's business — fell to a £4.8 million loss in the second half of last year and overall pre-tax profits crashed to £50 million, from £171 million.

RJB gave warning of more reductions in use of coal this year as additional new gas-fired power stations eat into its electricity supply market.

The profits fell short of City expectations. Charles Kernot, the leading industry analyst, who is with Paribas, had forecast £60 million. He said: "There must be some increase in productivity. The cost of producing coal is close to the selling price."

RJB shares fell 7p to 62½p. The final dividend, due on May 24, falls to 4p (10p), making 7p (20p). Earnings per share slumped to 22.8p (78.3p). Gordon McPhie, finance director, said that deep mines' profitability had been hit by geological problems late last year, but that RJB was trying to ensure that costs fell by 2 to 3 per cent a year. However, RJB's options are limited, he

conceded. The company has just signed an enhanced pay deal with the Union of Democratic Mineworkers after a threat of strike action. It is to offer the same deal to the National Union of Mineworkers, which yesterday declared a mandate for industrial action.

Immediate pit closures are not yet on the cards, but are likely if National Power's long-term demands for coal fall short of production. The generator has signed for supplies until 2001, but has still to commit itself beyond that date as it waits on government and regulatory approval for its acquisition of Midlands Electricity's supply business and its sale of Drax power station.

For the year to December 31, RJB's coal sales fell from 31.2 million tonnes to 25.9 million tonnes. Underground output declined from 25.3 million tonnes to 19.8 million tonnes.

RJB has still to reveal the strategic review that it unveiled with the announcement of its interim results in October. Mr McPhie said that the bulk of the work was done, but final decisions remained. The company is under pressure to announce an overseas acquisition to bring about some growth in the business.



John Barton, left, Jardine Lloyd Thompson's chairman, and Ken Carter, chief executive

JLT makes progress in first year after merger

BY GAVIN LUMSDEN

JARDINE Lloyd Thompson, the insurance broker formed by the merger of JIB and Lloyd Thompson two years ago, enjoyed a robust first full year in 1998.

Despite weak market conditions, JLT increased pre-tax profits before exceptional items by £7.8 million, to £58.3 million, on turnover up 3 per cent, to £332 million, as it cut back on costs and won new business.

Operating profits before exceptional items rose by 19 per cent, to £54.9 million. Earnings per share leapt by 22 per cent, to 20.7p, from 17p in 1997.

JLT is now London's largest quoted insurance broker after Willis Corroon was sold to KKR, the US buyout specialist, and Sedgwick was sold to the US broking giant Marsh & McLennan.

Although only ranked fifth in the world, JLT has begun to find favour from many companies that are wary of the heavy dominance of the US brokers Aon and Marsh & McLennan and wish to deal with an independent.

Ken Carter, chief executive, said: "In the last four months, we have won two substantial international accounts and a handful of UK ones, which frankly we wouldn't have had a chance of getting a few years ago."

A 7p final dividend makes a year's total of 12p, against an annualised equivalent in 1997 of 10.8p. The shares rose 12p, to 182p, yesterday.

Johnson Fry to pay despite loss

BY GAVIN LUMSDEN

JOHNSON FRY, the fund manager, is maintaining its final dividend despite a four-fold increase in losses caused by a two-year reconstruction.

The final payout remains 2p a share, making an unchanged 4p total, although pre-tax losses rose to £1.2 million in 1998, from £236,000.

Rebecca Thomas, managing director, said that the figures hid strong underlying growth in fund management, now the company's sole activity. In the

past two years, the company has sold Pinnacle, its housing division, and Healthsave, its medical insurance business.

Ms Thomas said: "The final dividend is uncovered, but we can afford it because we are sitting on £6.3 million of cash, some of which we will be investing in the fund management business."

At operating level, continuing activities improved from a £1.4 million loss in 1997 to a £169,000 profit. Funds under management rose by 25 per cent to £1.18 billion.

Accountants to offer website 'Kitemark'

CHARTERED accountants are aiming to be at the heart of assuring consumers who buy products and services on the Internet that their transactions are safe (Robert Bruce writes).

Britain's three chartered accountancy institutes have joined forces to bring WebTrust, a product developed by the AICPA, the main US account-

ancy body, to the UK. The service provides a "seal of approval" that appears on a website that has been through rigorous tests to assure customers of its security, privacy and delivery.

It is aimed to become the equivalent of a Kitemark for e-commerce. LINKS: www.aicpa.org

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Dutch court to hear case against Gucci

BERNARD ARNAULT, chairman of LVMH, will today have his case against Gucci heard in an Amsterdam court. M. Arnauld alleges that Gucci has illegally created 20 million new shares through a new employee trust to neutralise the 20 million in Gucci that he has bought through LVMH. He says that Gucci, which is listed in Amsterdam, is only allowed to create such a trust to benefit employees. He believes that this qualification has not been met.

If M. Arnauld is successful, he will have a much better chance of winning a vote on March 23, which will decide whether Gucci's board should accommodate an LVMH-nominated director. Domenico De Sole, chief executive of Gucci, says that such a director would be in a position to steal the company's business secrets and pass them on to M. Arnauld. As things stand, Gucci's new share trust can cancel out any vote cast by M. Arnauld at this meeting because both camps have a 25.6 per cent stake.

Banana battle halted

ARBITRATORS from the World Trade Organisation yesterday asked the EU and the US for more information before they rule on the transatlantic banana dispute. The request means that swinging tariffs that the US had this week been due to put on EU imports are unlikely to be sanctioned in the WTO, diplomats said. Arbitrators had been due to rule on how much US firms might have lost because of an EU banana regime favouring fruit from former European colonies.

Brazil supports real

BRAZIL intervened in the foreign exchange markets again yesterday to prop up the real as it tumbled to a record low, threatening to throw Latin America's biggest economy deeper into crisis. Traders said that the Brazilian central bank reverted to selling dollars on Tuesday, after a day on the sidelines, in order to rein in the currency which bottomed out at a record intraday low of 2.22 to the dollar. By midday the real had inched up to a still-fragile 2.16 to the dollar.

Jermyn lifts value

JERMYN INVESTMENT PROPERTIES, a property company listed in London and Dublin, lifted net asset value last year by 62 per cent to 399.8p, from 247.5p. Jermyn has increased its total dividend to 7p, from 6p, with a final 4.3p. Pre-tax profits were £3.3 million, up from £1.7 million previously. Earnings per share were 17.29p (6.26p). The shares rose 28½p to 325p in London. Ray Horney, chairman, said lower interest rates were producing signs of increased activity in property.

Zeneca denies sell-off

ZENECA, the pharmaceuticals group that plans to merge with Astra of Sweden, has ruled out the sale of its agrochemicals business. Michael Pragnell, chief executive of Zeneca's agrochemicals arm, told analysts: "There is no intention of selling off the agrochemical business." Agrochemicals made profits of £216 million last year from sales of £1.7 billion. Analysts had suggested that AstraZeneca would sell the business to focus on the more highly rated drugs operation.

Mayflower venture

MAYFLOWER, the bus and car group, is forming a joint venture with Freightliner, a US subsidiary of DaimlerChrysler. This will see Mayflower buses sold in America via the distribution network of Freightliner, which makes heavy trucks and school buses. Mayflower has had a negligible presence in the US bus market. A deal should be signed by April and the first buses delivered in October. They will come from Mayflower's UK factories, but will be made in North Carolina eventually.

United overhaul ends

UNITED INDUSTRIES, the engineering group, said that it had almost completed its restructuring and expects to reap the full benefits this year. United has spent £4.45 million on the overhaul. Employee numbers have been cut by 20 per cent to about 1,000. Cost savings are estimated at £3.4 million a year. In the year to January 2 pre-tax profits were just £850,000 (£3.6 million). Adjusted earnings per share were 10.14p (8.05p). The final dividend of 2.9p gives a total for the year of 2.9p (2.6p).

Somerset homes deal

SOUTH SOMERSET HOMES, a housing association, has raised £116.2 million to buy 8,900 properties from the local council and build 1,400 more, through a bond issue and a loan organised by Paribas, the French investment bank. The association has launched a £67 million asset-backed issue and raised a further £49.2 million in bank loans from Paribas and Abbey National to finance the purchase of the properties from South Somerset District Council for £69.3 million.

BPP expresses caution

SHARES OF BPP, the professional education group, fell by more than 10 per cent yesterday after the company reported results below expectations. For 1998, pre-tax profits rose 8 per cent to £13.1 million with earnings per share rising to 30.7p (28.3p) and the total dividend up 1.25p to 17.25p. Richard Price, chairman, said: "The fields in which we operate are not immune from lower levels of business confidence — we start 1999 with a degree of caution." The shares fell 55p to 460p.

Fairview advances

FAIRVIEW, the housebuilder that demerged from Hillsdown Holdings last year, criticised local authorities yesterday for the "extortionate payments" demanded for planning consents. It called for reform of the current "totally unsatisfactory legislation which is a form of concealed taxation". Fairview reported an underlying 10 per cent rise in pre-tax profit for 1998 to £48.1 million and a maiden dividend of 2.75p. It said planning delays would mean lower sales volumes this year.

EXCHANGE RATES

Bank	Bank
Australia \$	2.59
Austria Sch	13.34
Belgium Fr	62.81
Canada \$	2.578
Cypriot £	0.8894
Denmark Kr	11.58
Egypt £	5.72
Finland Mk	9.24
France Fr	10.16
Germany Dr	3.054
Greece Dr	502
Hong Kong \$	15.34
India Ru	12.14
Indonesia	1,7942
Israel Sh	1,1295
Italy Lit	2037
Japan Yen	209.58
Netherlands Gld	0.671
New Zealand \$	3.448
Norway Kr	3.20
Portugal Esc	33.27
S Africa Rd	10.70
Spain Ptas	257.41
Sweden Kr	14.03
Switzerland Fr	2.507
Taiwan \$	57.917
USA \$	1.722

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COMMENTARY
by our City Editor

Sir Clive Thompson is not renowned for his tolerance and understanding so he can hardly complain when his investors take a stern line. In truth, to have increased earnings by more than 18 per cent is a remarkable achievement but, as Mrs Micawber might have advised, he who promises shareholders 10 per cent growth and delivers 11 per cent is a hero; he who promises 12 per cent and delivers only 11 per cent is a failure.

It is bad luck that Sir Clive's shippage from his self-imposed target should coincide with his reign as President of the CBI. It is not as if the Rentokil chief personally slays the vermin, but there will inevitably be some critics who mutter that Centre Point is proving something of a distraction.

Certainly, Sir Clive is as determined to achieve results as the CBI as he is at Rentokil. Under his leadership, the CBI agenda has demonstrated a new scepticism for the Third Way of doing business. This is, apparently, not responsible for the decision of Alistair Turner, the Director-General, to leave at the end of the year: he had long planned to take time off to write a book. But it does leave the CBI hunting for a DG when such animals are much in demand.

The Institute of Directors, the Association of British Insurers, the Engineering Employers' Federation and the Society of Motor

Manufacturers and Traders all have the headhunters out in search of their equivalents of chief executives. Whatever qualities the organisations are seeking, the candidates will have near the top of their considerations the identity of the chairman with whom they will have to work. And if Sir Clive is a tough taskmaster to himself, as at Rentokil, then he can be expected to be no less demanding of those who work with him.

With so many similar roles on offer at once, the organisations will have to use a degree of imagination in finding suitable candidates. The IOD's insistence on someone with real business experience to follow on from Tim Melville-Ross may rule out the media-friendly Ruth Lea just as it did her predecessor, Ann Robinson, who promptly left to run the National Association of Pension Funds.

Over at the ABI, Mark Beale may have to postpone his departure date beyond the end of April, so tricky is the search for a replacement. Speaking for the financial services industry may not be everyone's idea of the ideal job. After five years at it, Mr Beale has decided to bow

out of trade associations. It may be that there are just too many bodies trying to make their case to Government. The Engineering Employers' used to have a role negotiating with trade unions. Without that, the CBI thought a merger made sense, particularly since the EEF has a healthy dowry. Perhaps the idea should be revived, then at least the number of searches for top talent could be narrowed.

The market magic of short division

Share price lagging again? Try new management or dramatic cost-cutting. Failing that, there is always a spot of financial engineering.

Fans of Allied Domecq, which has spent two pointless generations of management effort refocusing from a drinks and food company to a drinks and estates group, are used to despair. The

shares are about a quarter down from last year's peak.

Hopes of an imminent demerger have therefore been dredged up again. No matter that attempts to merge with another spirits business have fallen under the table. No matter that the pubs and restaurants side has just issued a profits warning, not the ideal prelude to a separate quotation: some day, all that potential will be realised. But over in California, demerger is high for techy investors in Hewlett-Packard. The pioneer that first turned plum orchards into Silicon Valley is to split itself in two.

Out goes the instrument business that sent the group on its transitorised way. Up go the shares. Freed from the detritus of history, the remaining six sevenths of the business will be suffused with new energy to expand from computers into highly rated Internet hardware.

Yes, Hewlett-Packard has a problem, too. During two years

in which computer-linked stocks carried all before them, H-P lacked spice and underperformed the Dow, of which it is an honoured but inevitably slightly middle-aged constituent.

Hiving off one seventh of your business is not quite the revolution that 3M or AT&T have undergone. For a \$75 billion (£46 billion) group, however, it is, inevitably, a big deal. The instrument group, covering anything from measurement to medicine, is being touted as the biggest public offering in Silicon Valley's history.

Both this and the main computer group are mature businesses in fast-growing industries. For years, annual growth of 20 per cent has been the norm. Of late, it has been harder to come by, as even Rentokil has shown. Computer sales are booming but prices are bombing. Asia's crisis does not help.

H-P keeps making things that change our lives, but the Silicon Valley action is in Internet soft-

ware groups that make little or no profit and a tiny fraction of Big Daddy's \$40 billion sales. The lesson runs both ways. If ever the Internet stocks attain the operating size that their market values imply, they will be hard-pressed to maintain the pace that their ratings demand.

Protection money must be necessary

For the unwary, the plethora of financial products on offer is fraught with danger. Even the Government appears liable to make a dud decision when venturing into the world of mortgages and insurance. The insurance ombudsman was audibly despairing yesterday. Despite all the warnings he has given on the subject of mortgage-protection policies, along comes HMG and signs on the dotted line.

But, as does occasionally happen, this was not so much a case of mis-selling as mis-buying. The simple proposition that those with mortgages should have insurance cover to ensure that the mortgage payments are met in the event of redundancy, illness

or even death brooks no argument. That should not be converted into a Government advertisement for mortgage-protection policies, too many of which are swathed in dangerous small print aimed at eradicating any such protection.

It was the previous Government that did much of the financial services industry's work for it in mis-selling personal pensions. It would be scandalous if a similar exercise were to be undertaken by the current administration. The ombudsman wants the DTI to take action to ensure that the policies are necessary and effective before it makes them compulsory. That seems a reasonable stance. There is much talk of improving children's understanding of financial services. Perhaps ministers could sit in on the classes.

Fiscal smoke-ring

CHEAP cigarettes from the Continent cost both the Exchequer and UK companies dear. They may also be boosting numbers of smokers. Cut duties to cut out contraband, manufacturers are bound to say. But they must know it is unrealistic. This is one occasion when Gordon Brown should indulge alike his Puritan instincts and his Federal proclivities. He should persuade our EU partners to swap cant for action on cigarettes and harmonise their duties and their enforcement efforts upwards.

Merger for CDL and M&C Hotels in the pipeline

BY DOMINIC WALSH

MILLENNIUM & Copthorne Hotels could be merged with CDL Hotels International, its Hong Kong-listed majority shareholder, to form a global four-star hotel group.

Kwek Leng Beng, the Singapore-based chairman of both companies, admitted yesterday that combining M&C, which has 24 hotels in Europe and New York, with its 52 per cent shareholder was "one of the options" he was considering in a bid to boost his hotel interests.

"Ultimately they will either have to work so closely together as to be considered as one company, or some kind of integration will need to be worked through to the benefit of both

sets of shareholders," he said. The possibility of a merger follows recent moves by CDL to convert some of its hotels in Singapore and New Zealand to the Copthorne brand. Meanwhile, both companies are developing Millennium Hotels and Resorts as an up-market corporate brand. Such a merger would effectively reverse the spinning off of M&C from CDL in 1996, although the London listing would be retained.

M&C yesterday unveiled a sparkling 20 per cent jump in 1998 pre-tax profits to £60.4 million from turnover up 10 per cent at £221.9 million. Earnings per share reached 30.6p (25.9p) and a final dividend of 6.5p makes a total of

10.2p (8.6p). The shares gained 11p to 536p.

Room occupancy was flat at 79.4 per cent, but a 9 per cent rise in the average room rate to £99.56 lifted the key yield per available room to £71.11 (£65.42). In London, the yield rose 4 per cent to £73.68 while the provinces were 8 per cent higher at £50.49. The strongest performance came from New York, where the yield was 12 per cent higher at £110.28.

John Wilson, chief executive, admitted that trading in the UK had seen "some softening", but the US was "going great guns". He added: "This is by no means a recession situation. Revenues in the first two months of 1999 are up year on year and we're looking forward with a degree of confidence."

Analysts have expressed concern at the lack of corporate activity but Mr Kwek said he would have no hesitation if the price was right. He hinted that, if necessary, he would consider diluting CDL's shareholding below 50 per cent to secure the right deal.

For the time being, however, the group is considering a number of opportunities in London, New York and Paris and is close to securing a management contract for a further UK hotel. Mr Kwek admitted that, subject to planning consent, he was interested in buying or operating Victoria House, an imposing neo-classical office building in Bloomsbury Square, London, which until last week was shortlisted as a possible home for the new mayor of London.

He also confirmed his interest in buying the Howard Hotel, just along the Thames from the Savoy Hotel, although he implied that the price being asked by the Barclay brothers, who own it, was too high. They are rumoured to be asking at least £40 million for the 153-room hotel.

Tempos, page 24



On the buses: Bob Davies, chief executive of Arriva, left, who welcomed Gareth Cooper as the company's chairman-elect

Arriva renews disposal plans

BY FRASER NELSON

BOB DAVIES, the new chief executive of Arriva, has put the company's car leasing division back on the auction block — and hinted that its 97 car dealerships could be next.

Mr Davies, nine weeks into the job, has reversed the decision of Gordon Hodgson, his predecessor, who broke off dis-

posal talks in December at a cost of £700,000. Mr Davies is now understood to be planning a break-up of Arriva that would transform the former Cowie Group into a dedicated bus and rail company.

Mr Davies said he should get a better price for the leasing division because end-of-lease cars are fetching better prices in the used car market.

When asked if he would also sell the car dealerships, he said: "In business, you never say never." Analysts believe that Mr Davies will sell the leasing division for a marginal improvement on the prices that Mr Hodgson rejected. Early suggestions put the range between £180 million and £200 million.

As expected, the company an-

nounced the resignation of Sir James McKinnon, non-executive chairman. He will be replaced by Gareth Cooper, the former managing director of Stena UK, the ferry operator.

An expected plunge in profits from the leasing division left pre-tax profits at a forecast £94.5 million (£101 million) for 1998. The total dividend rises to 14.2p (13.5p).

Talk of slowdown hits Druid shares

BY CHRIS AYRES

SHARES in Druid Group, the IT consultancy, yesterday fell by nearly 8 per cent, to £14, as it admitted that parts of the IT market "may slow slightly" as companies delay big projects until after 2000.

Druid, which employs more than 600 consultants in the UK and abroad, gives advice on implementing "enterprise resource planning" software packages such as SAP and Baan.

John Pocock, chief executive, said that if clients delayed big projects, Druid could easily adapt to help them to fix urgent millennium problems. "I myself could sit down in front of a PC and fix programs in an extreme situation," he said.

Druid lifted pre-tax profits by 68 per cent, to £4 million, in its half year to December 31, on sales of £27.8 million, up 94 per cent. Earnings per share were 12.05p, up 73 per cent. An interim dividend of 1.6p, up from 1.25p, is due on April 23.

Key director quits Telecom Italia

BY CARL MORTISHED

TELECOM ITALIA, the utility on the receiving end of a £36 billion bid from Olivetti, its much smaller rival, has lost its finance director.

Telecom Italia confirmed yesterday that Fulvio Conti had left and would be replaced by Giovanni Stella, who was previously with Agip, part of ENI, the oil and gas company. Signor Stella was hired in December to be the right hand man to Franco Bernabè, Tele-

com Italia's new chief executive. Mr Bernabè is a former boss of ENI.

The boardroom upheaval is being seen as part of an effort by Signor Bernabè to get a grip on the slow-moving bureaucracy of the country's telephone company.

Signor Bernabè achieved heroic status in the financial community by transforming ENI, once a sprawling bureaucracy, riddled with corruption, into a company that could rival the world's leading oil companies.

Continent a growth black spot for CRH

BY CARL MORTISHED
INTERNATIONAL
BUSINESS EDITOR

CRH, the building materials firm based in the Irish Republic, suffered a growth hiatus in continental Europe last year while its Irish and North American profits motored ahead.

The acquisitive CRH, which spent £604 million (£410 million) buying businesses last year, including the UK brick-maker Istock, raised its overall pre-tax profit by 27 per cent to £409 million in 1998, but returns from mainland Europe fell 14 per cent to £66 million, because of wet spring weather in Northern Europe and pricing pressures in Poland.

Harry Sheridan, CRH finance director, said that the company was selling more cement in Poland than in Ireland. "Poland has tremendous growth but pricing does not match the high level of inflation. There is a lot of jockeying for position among cement producers."

Mr Sheridan said that CRH's acquisition drive would continue. "Last year we had 25 bolt-on acquisitions, each worth about £8 million. We would hope for a similar number this year." CRH is believed to be looking at Scan-cem, the Nordic building materials firm that owns Castle Cement, the second-largest UK producer. An auction is under way for CRH's UK-based Keystone builder's merchants, expected to fetch almost £200 million.

Profits in the US leapt from €172 million to €246 million, thanks to a buoyant residential market and a sharp increase in federal funding for highways.

In the Irish Republic, cement sales grew 10 per cent, in contrast to Northern Ireland, where a decline in infrastructure spending led to a fall of 10 per cent in sales.

Don Godson, chief executive, said: "We expect further growth in 1999 but at different rates in different markets."

CRH is increasing the dividend by 15 per cent to 17.14 cents.

Alcatel in \$2bn bid for Xylan

FROM A CORRESPONDENT IN PARIS

ALCATEL, the French telecoms group, announced a \$2 billion (£1.25 billion) agreed cash bid for Xylan Corp, a US manufacturer of Internet equipment, whose shares trade on the Nasdaq market.

The move further reduces Alcatel's dependence on former European monopoly telecoms operators, its traditional clients, whose shrinking needs prompted a disastrous September profit warning that knocked 40 per cent off the share price in two days.

Alcatel had been considering setting up a separately listed US subsidiary but has dropped this plan.

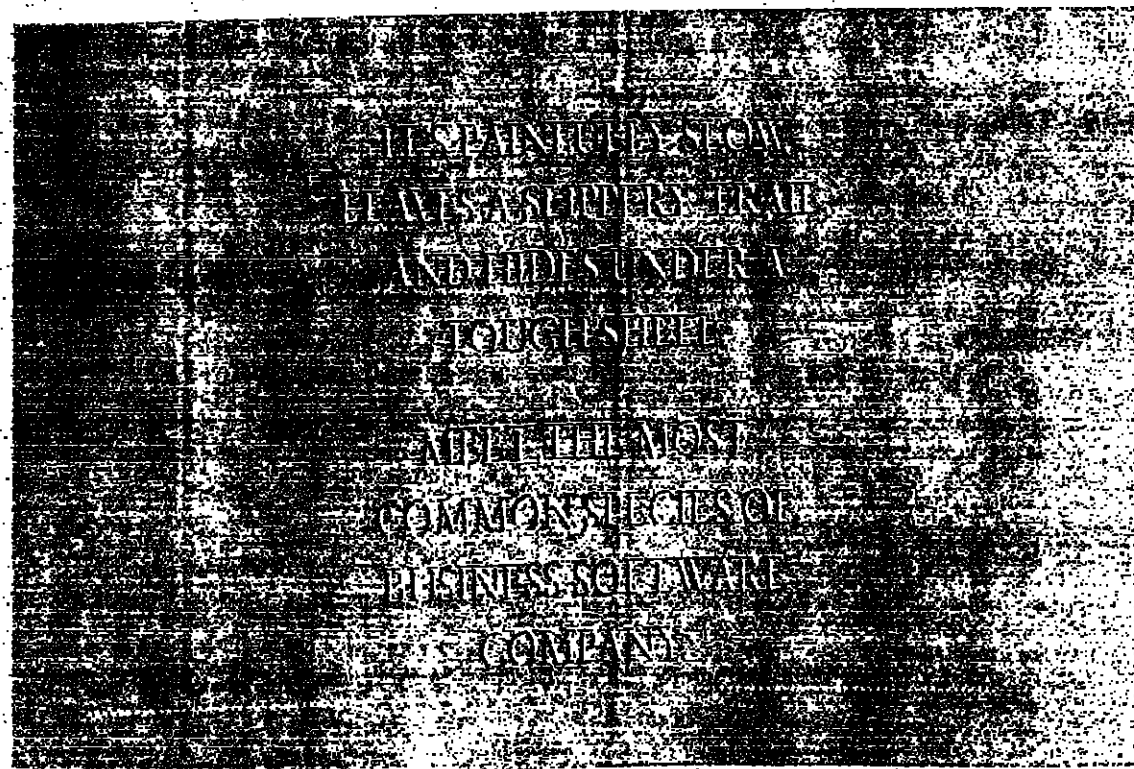
Serge Tchuruk, chairman of Alcatel, said the company expected to announce another acquisition, worth up to \$300 million, in remote access.

"We are fishing with a line, not a dragnet," M Tchuruk said, referring to the company's 1998 acquisitions of DSC and Packet Engines, the Xylan bid and the pending purchase. "We are taking a lead on even our most respectable competitors," he added.

Alcatel believes the convergence between voice telephony and data switching will accelerate and it can add Xylan's position in local area networks (LAN) and Internet protocol (IP) to its stronghold in telecom switches.

Xylan's 1998 sales were \$348 million. This is expected to rise to \$450 million in 1999 and to more than \$1 billion in 2000. At that time, Alcatel would have a 10 per cent market share in company data switching, where Xylan now has 5.6 per cent.

w advances



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LAWSON

STOCK MARKET

MICHAEL CLARK

Investors display caution ahead of rate cut decision

SHARE prices marked time yesterday waiting to see if the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee votes to cut rates for the sixth time in as many months.

Last night the betting was evenly balanced with the latest average earnings figures allowing analysts to argue that there is scope for a reduction. But in the face of such narrow odds, investors decided that caution was the best strategy and remained on the sidelines for much of the day. The FTSE 100 index having reversed an earlier fall of 27 points, eventually closed almost all square, up 0.1 at 6,061.3. The FTSE 250 index rose 18.9 to 5,277.3 in another day of thin trading that saw total turnover reach 967 million.

GEC continued to build up a full head of steam with a rise of 20p to 536p in the wake of its acquisition of Reltec. SG Securities, the broker, raises GEC a "buy" while Lehman Brothers, the US securities house, is excited by prospects at Marconi.

Great Universal Stores raced up 26p to 822p with several brokers giving chase. WestLB Panmure was a buyer, while Merrill Lynch has reiterated its "accumulate" recommendation and raised its target price from 825p to 875p.

Mark & Spencer continued to lose ground dipping back below the 400p level with a fall of 16p to 395p as more than 18 million shares were traded. Philip Dorgan at WestLB Panmure reckons the shares are worth only 300p.

There was a lukewarm response to results from Norwich Union, whose chief executive is Richard Harvey, although the price did manage to close 5p better at 451p. NU managed to outperform its main rivals with both its life and pension and general insurance operations performing reasonably well.

The general insurers were pleased by NU's performance with CGU climbing 43p to 928p, and Royal & Sun Alliance 214p better at 533p.

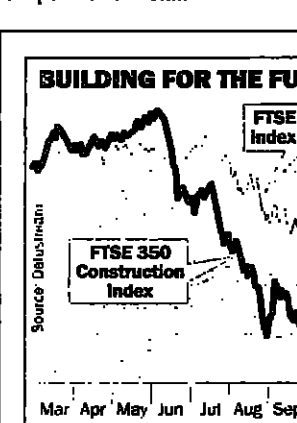
Swallow Group, 1p higher at 290p, the new name for Vaux, was notable by its silence yesterday as the market awaited news of the controversial sale of most of its brewing and tenanted pub interests to a management team. The MBO team's four-week exclusivity period expired on Monday and an extension had been ex-



Bracing: Richard Harvey, left and Mike Biggs, finance director, saw shares of Norwich Union rise 5p to 451p

pected, but analysts believe the estimated £70 million deal is now finely balanced. One said last night: "You have to question whether this deal is going to happen or not."

Elsewhere in the drinks sector there was a flurry of interest in Allied Domecq, 4p better at 477p, after a report that it was moving closer to a demerger of its pub and retail interests.



THE housebuilders have had to contend with a touch of subsidence in recent months.

The sector has underperformed the market by as much as 30 per cent with the buyers holding off until there is clear evidence of a pick-up in fortunes for the housing market.

Hopes are high that the long-awaited recovery may soon be under way. There was evidence of support yesterday as Barrat Developments raced up 10p to 273p. Beazer Group 13p to

186p. Berkeley Group 7p to 572p. Redrow Group 5p to 178p. Wilson Bowden 40p to 623p, and George Wimpey 8p to 142p.

Brokers say the five cuts in interest rates have helped to underpin sentiment and another cut today would provide a further welcome boost.

Next week's Budget may also offer the housebuilders hope. Brokers know the sector has been oversold but still need some convincing to start buying.

computer network specialist, Sp dealer at 63p on turnover of almost 300,000 shares. Barrie Morgan, non-executive chairman, has bought 30,000 shares at 53p. The move has helped fan speculation that a bid may be on the way for the company, which has come up from a low of 33p since October.

Talk of a large seller doing the rounds left Triad Group 9p down at 561p. Shield Diagnostics fell 35p to 465p as shareholders began switching into merger partner Axis, the Norwegian pharmaceutical group, which was changing hands at 480p on the Oslo bourse. The merger terms give Axis the upper hand and offer its shareholders a cheap way into Shield.

PPL Therapeutics was a firm market adding 7p at 965p after bullish comments from BT Alex Brown, the broker. AIM-listed Wynnstay Properties was steady at 135p as Philip Collins, chairman, picked up 25,000 shares at 135p. He now holds 260,303 shares, or 8.25 per cent.

The directors of Perkins Foods, 14p down at 111p, have been buying shares just a day after the group unveiled final results. Ian Blackburn, chief executive, and Richard Martin, finance director, have between them bought 20,000 shares at prices ranging from 113p to 115p. It takes their total holding to 838,184, or less than 1 per cent.

Speculative buying lifted Trio Holdings 14p to 104p. Hopes are high that Nitran Capital will make a full bid for the business after acquiring The Regent Pacific Group's near 30 per cent stake. Hill Hire rose 13p to 141p after a round of presentations for fund managers.

SHORT-EDGED: Shorter-dated issues bounced back after last week's sell-off as hopes grew that the MPC will today sanction another cut in rates.

In the futures pit, the June series of the long gilt rose 9p to £116.23 as 29,000 contracts were completed. Among conventional issues, Treasury 7 per cent 2002 put on 18p at £106.47, while at the shorter end Treasury 8 per cent 2021 finished 6p cheaper at £145.48.

NEW YORK: US shares shot higher in the wake of the Hewlett-Packard demerger announcement. At midday the Dow Jones industrial average was up 85.57 points to 9,410.35.

MAJOR INDICES

New York (midday):	
Dow Jones	9410.35 (+85.57)
S&P Composite	1245.96 (+9.80)
Tokyo:	
Nikkei Average	13621.06 (+300.66)
Hong Kong:	
Hong Kong	9913.58 (+106.88)
Amsterdam:	
AEX Index	535.09 (+1.22)
Sydney:	
ASX	2882.8 (+18.5)
Frankfurt:	
DAX	4804.02 (+19.71)
Singapore:	
SEAC	1418.61 (+4.24)
Brussels:	
BEI20	3334.33 (+4.30)
Paris:	
CAC-40	4048.63 (+16.58)
Zurich:	
SIX Index	1339.90 (+2.20)
London:	
FTSE 100	6061.3 (+0.1)
FTSE 250	5277.3 (+18.9)
FTSE 350	5280.4 (+18.9)
FTSE 100	2775.95 (+5.29)
FTSE All-Share	2765.55 (+1.49)
FTSE New Frontiers	2681.3 (+5.58)
FTSE First Index	154.31 (+0.14)
FTSE Govt Secs	112.97 (+0.07)
Barclays	7621
HSBC	1622
Bank of England (official rate)	4.75
Bank of England (overnight)	163.4 Jan (2.4%) Jan 1997 = 100
Bank of England (3 month)	161.8 Jan (2.4%) Jan 1997 = 100

RECENT ISSUES

Acorn Income Fund	101p
Close Bros Div VCT	100p
Enhanced Zero Trust	100p
Gander Properties	7p
Jupiter En Zero Div Pl	107p
Jupiter Enhanced Inc	98p
Luminar Warrants	335p
NBA Quantum	109p
South African Breweries	439p

RIGHTS ISSUES

Brands Hatch (10)	21p
Peptide Therapeutics (78)	1p

MAJOR CHANGES

Stock	Close	Chg	Chg%
Petra Diamonds	81p	+21p	+35.8
Via Hedges	103p	+1p	+1.0
GEI Int	44p	+6p	+13.5
Telesec	132p	+17p	+12.9
Biocomp Int	81p	+10p	+12.4
Caplan Int	94p	+12p	+12.8
Estates Agency	500p	+50p	+11.1
Orbit	32p	+3p	+10.3
Dalton	77p	+7p	+9.8
Albion	107p	+10p	+9.8
Chelton Sp	67p	+6p	+9.7
Jammy	32p	+2p	+6.3
Close Bros	690p	+58p	+9.1
Brooks Service	52p	+2p	+3.8
Cityview	52p	+2p	+3.8
Adrian	63p	+5p	+8.5
Swallowfield	44p	+3p	+6.8
Arms Hedges	224p	+20p	+8.9
Rothmans	123p	+10p	+8.1
EFM	276p	+3p	+1.1
Quadrant Grp	42p	+3p	+7.1
Beazer	186p	+13p	+7.0

Initial concerns

IT IS EASY to blame Rentokil Initial's non-achievement of 20 per cent growth for the walling 10.7 per cent hole cut into the value of the company's share price yesterday. It is equally easy to dismiss the reaction as unjustified since if you ignore the adverse effects of currency translation Rentokil did meet the targets. Even after currencies the growth in profits and earnings per share was an undeniably impressive 18 per cent.

Moreover yesterday's disappointment, such as it was, should have come as no surprise. Ample warning was given when interim results, posted last August, failed to meet the benchmarks. Between August and the close of play on Monday Rentokil shares continued to impress, gaining more than 100p and outperforming the market average by 15 per cent.

But in truth the stock price collapse finds

base in more serious worries. Yesterday's results showed precious little turnover growth, and if Rentokil is to maintain its sparkling growth record it needs help from the top line. The easy pickings from acquisitions, it seems, are becoming harder to find.

Also upsetting was the big rise in working capital requirements. Rentokil spent an extra £50 million here, and the company was less than convincing in its explanation of why these costs rose. It denies Rentokil's reputation for rigorous operational control. Questions can also be raised about what would happen if Sir Clive Thompson, Rentokil's evangelical chief executive, was lured away from the group. Rentokil's wonderful accomplishments over the past 20 years are also Sir Clive's personal achievement.

The best is behind Rentokil. Reduce.

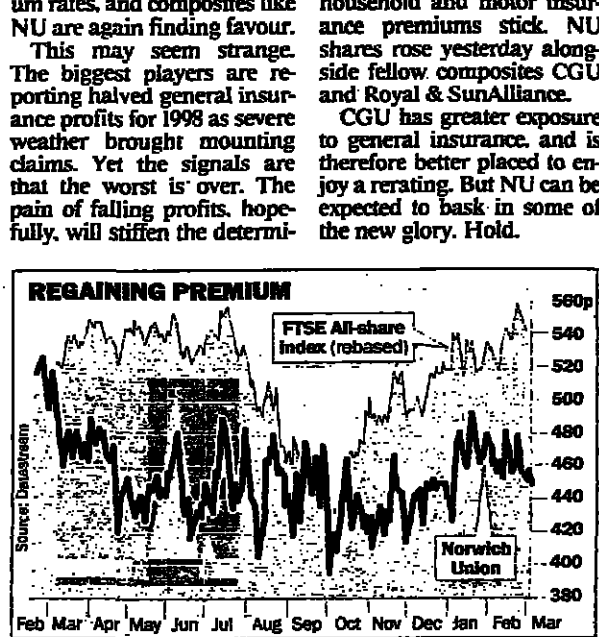
Norwich Union

SINCE flotation in 1997 Norwich Union shares have given plenty to smile about. But the bulk of the share price performance came in the early months. As the chart shows the stock has disappointed more recently. In absolute terms the shares retained their value, but relative to the market average NU has underperformed by about 15 per cent over the past 12 months.

However, this could be about to change. In 1998 much of the attention in the insurance sector focused on the life and pensions specialists. Legal & General stock became popular thanks to the domination of life over general insurance. For similar reasons the NU acquisition at the end of last year of London & Edinburgh, a general insurer, was decided by many.

Now the talk is of a revival

REGAINING PREMIUM



Gallagher

DETEST the weed as much as you like, but for an investment, it is difficult to ignore the reliability of tobacco. Gallaher Group, which lists Benson & Hedges and Silk Cut among its brands, served up another reminder of these attractions yesterday with annual profit figures.

The headline numbers declined, sure enough. But behind the 5.5 per cent drop in pre-tax profits and the sharp rise in bootlegging are numbers that should lure even the more cautious investors.

Gallagher is trading on a prospective earnings multiple of 13, representing a 35 per cent discount to the market wide price/earnings ratio. It also produces a dividend yield of nearly 6 per cent, not far off double the average.

Fears about Gallagher's exposure to potentially costly litigation are justified, although they should not be overdone — particularly in light of last

week's court ruling, which dismissed the claims of 46 out of 53 plaintiffs. Five of the remaining claims could be time-barred.

Some uncertainty is also generated by the rapid rise in bootlegging, which Gallagher believes is now supplying 8 per cent of the UK cigarette market and could well go higher.

But these negatives should not overshadow the fundamental financials, even after remembering that the tobacco industry will always trade at a discount to the market.

Buy.

M&C Hotels

MILLENNIUM & Copthorne Hotels is a class act and despite the travails of the sector last year, its quality has shone throughout its three-year quoted life.

Despite some softening in the UK, it is still squeezing more profit out of its hotels than almost anybody else. Yet while Ladbrokes is buying

Stakis at a multiple of 14 times EBITDA, M&C is currently valued at just ten times EBITDA. This despite having a higher-quality portfolio with an international spread.

There are moves afoot to improve its food and beverage offering by introducing some fashionable Far Eastern concepts, while Granada has been brought in to run its health and fitness facilities. One of Millennium's few problems is the brand, which has little customer recognition. M&C knows this, and action is being taken.

Expansion projects at three of its biggest hotels should ensure healthy earnings growth this year. Acquisitions should drive momentum but even if Mr Kwek, the controlling shareholder, does not sanction purchases, he may ultimately sell his stake to one of the many prospective bidders who approach him on an almost weekly basis. Buy.

EDITED BY ROBERT COLE

COMMODITIES

LIFFE

Commodity	Unit	Price	Change
Cocoa	100 lbs	846.30	+1.50
Gold	1000 gms	350.00	+0.10
Silver	1000 gms	160.00	+0.05
Platinum	1000 gms	1200.00	+10.00

ROBUSTA COFFEE

Commodity	Unit	Price	Change
Robusta Coffee	100 lbs	175.00	+1.00
Arabica Coffee	100 lbs	150.00	+0.50

WHITE SUGAR (FOB)

Commodity	Unit	Price	Change
White Sugar (FOB)	100 lbs	212.12	+0.12
White Sugar (FOB)	100 lbs	212.12	+0.12

MEAT & LIVESTOCK

Commodity	Unit	Price	Change
Meat & Livestock	100 lbs	120.00	+0.50
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COMMODITIES

LIFFE

Commodity	Unit	Price	Change
Liffe	100 lbs	120.00	+0.50
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concerns

No one was more surprised than I when, after I wrote a polemic on the use and abuse of the earnings statistics in these columns at the end of last July, there was a blow-up about the actual data. The official series was withdrawn and an inquiry was instituted.

Yesterday the new figures were presented by Patricia Hewitt, the Economic Secretary to the Treasury, supported by Mervyn King, the Deputy Governor of the Bank of England, Sir Andrew Turnbull, Permanent Secretary of the Treasury, the Director of the Office of National Statistics. Two distinguished academics produced impressive reports on What Went Wrong and how to put it right. The two reports, one by Professor Chambers of Southampton University and the other by Martin Wheale, Director of the National Institute for Economic Research, are in my opinion technical classics. But, oh, what a tangled web the establishment weaves when it wants us to be confused. Why are the earnings statistics

We're no nearer to truth on earnings

If profit-related bonuses are not taken out, the numbers are meaningless, writes Robin Marris

so important? There are two closely linked but actually distinct reasons. If earnings are growing at, say 5 per cent per annum, productivity is growing at, say, 2 per cent, and profit margins happen to be constant, forecast inflation can only be 3 per cent. For the Monetary Policy Committee, given its inflation target of 2.5 per cent, this would be bad news: members must raise the interest rate. But suppose earnings are actually growing one point more slowly, then forecast inflation is below the target, and, according to the rules laid down by Gordon Brown as now interpreted by the MPC, interest rates should be reduced. In other words, a very small difference in the statistical interpretation has, in theory, a very large effect on policy.

The second reason is connected with the fact that the MPC appears to believe in the operational validity of the so-called Natural Rate of Unemployment. This is a proxy for a state in the labour market where the feedback of prices on wages produces not necessarily a high rate of inflation but definitely an accelerating rate of inflation. It is a mathematically impeccable proposition but for theoretical and practical reasons it has proved impossible to measure the actual unemployment rate which, at any one time, would tip the economy into actually accelerating inflation. Consequently, the only way to forecast whether inflation is accelerating or decelerating is to try and estimate whether current earnings are accelerating. Early this year the

MPC clearly implied it believed both these factors were at work. So there were two questions dominating policy in this country in the early spring of 1998. Were earnings rising unhealthily fast? Were they accelerating? Yesterday Mervyn King said the new and old figures gave much the same impression on that topic and that his committee had never placed great emphasis on the earnings figures in their policy decisions at that time. So where do we stand now? The answer is that on a quite crucial point the new reports still lead to misleading interpretations. Let me repeat the problem. If profit-related bonuses are not taken out, the numbers are worse than meaningless. As a result of a brilliant investigation by Martin Dicks, of Leh-

man Bros (Lehman Bros Economic Research Report, September 3, 1998), we now know that the dominating factor in bonus payments towards the end of any financial year is the level of profits earned in the previous financial year. The general effect is an erratic blip in the total earnings series, mostly occurring in December and July. There are two implications of Martin Dicks's discovery. First, that no simply "univariate" method of deseasonalisation (ie one which, for example, does not take account of the actual movements of profits) can cope with the resulting problem. Secondly, nor does presenting the data on a year-on-year basis do any better. The only thing to do is to remove

the bonuses directly. In the past the Office of National Statistics has not published a "purged" series, but by last summer they were giving useful information on which one could make estimates. This I did in my July article. From the result I concluded that "regular" non-bonus earnings were not accelerating. So what has been done about bonuses in the Turnbull Report? Answer: relegated to page 83, given three lines and a small table. The new purged figures consistently show an absolute rate of earnings inflation just over half a point lower than the old figures. I cannot understand how Mervyn King could argue that this is not significant. On the question of acceleration in early 1998, the new figures actually give more support to the MPC than

the old. Should a reasonable person looking at either the new or the old bonus-purged series, have reasonably feared that earnings were set to rise above the 5 per cent mark? But most people were not looking at a purged series, because none, other than mine, at that time existed.

The new unpurged series surely gives the answer "yes". That is economically deeply misleading because it is very questionable whether bonuses based on profits enter directly into labour costs at all. After May 1998 the purged series significantly decelerates and the unpurged series exaggerates this result. The MPC bases its actions on forecasts. Did they forecast the deceleration? It would be nice for them to be able to reply that the deceleration which actually occurred was due to their hawkish rates policy. But the timing is rather close, is it not?

Robin Marris is emeritus professor of economics at Birkbeck College, University of London

And lo, God and Mammon created born-again banking

When a Scottish bank meets a US evangelist, the potential is huge, writes Caroline Merrell

God may have had a hand in the fortuitous meeting between Pat Robertson, the American television evangelist, and William Hendry, the head of Bank of Scotland's American division, but both parties can spot the financial potential of marrying Mammon to a huge market bonded by religion.

Their introduction in New York last year spawned plans for the New Foundation Bank, a joint venture between the Scottish bank and Robertson Financial Services, a division of the former presidential candidate's multi-billion dollar business empire.

The new bank is expected to get US regulatory approval in five to six months' time. It will be chaired by Mr Robertson but will be majority-owned by Bank of Scotland.

In structure, the link-up will resemble the joint initiative between Bank of Scotland and Sainsbury's. However, whereas Sainsbury's Bank has access to the supermarket's 20 million customers, the New Foundation Bank's target audience will be the 55 million viewers of Mr Robertson's Christian Broadcasting Network.

As one analyst put it: "The potential is huge." Sainsbury's Bank now has one million customers, £1.7 billion on deposit, and £700 million committed to personal loans, mortgages and cards. The bank is expected to move into profit next year, after start-up losses totalling £30 million.

Peter Burt, Bank of Scotland's chief executive, is acutely aware of the problems of launching a direct banking operation in the US, where the market for telephone banking is less developed than in the UK. "It would be my nightmare to get five million customers in the first week," he said. He pointed to the problems



Pat Robertson, pictured right with presidential candidate Bob Dole, could bring 55 million TV viewers to the new bank

faced by Egg, Prudential's direct banking subsidiary. Its launch, backed by a high-profile TV ad campaign, was so successful that applicants had to wait for up to three weeks for the mailing pack.

Mr Burt said: "We are going to tread very carefully, with a phased, low-key entry into the market. We want to see how big the inflow is going to be."

Ideally, he wants the start-

up costs of the new bank to reach around \$30 million in the first year. "Spendings £100 million on launching the new bank would be unacceptable to Bank of Scotland's shareholders," he said.

Initially, the new bank will offer deposit accounts. Eventually, it will add credit cards and mortgages, both of which will be more profitable.

Rob Down, banking analyst

at ABN Amro, said the downside of the joint venture was limited, whereas the potential was huge. "If they get five million customers over four years, then they are effectively doubling their customer base. The TV network probably has around 15 to 20 million regular viewers," he pointed out that many of these viewers would be interested in taking out a credit card, for example,

where each transaction resulted in a payment to charity. In the UK, the last 18 months have seen the launch of four new direct banking operations, on top of the telephone banking services offered by First Direct, Lloyds TSB, Direct Line, Natwest, Sainsbury's and Tesco.

Despite entering what appears to be a saturated market, the four new ventures

beyond the normal shelf-life of an untested campaigner. His biggest fight recently has been over the actual sins of the President. Mr Robertson was one of the first mainstream commentators calling for impeachment. He was forced to recant his view when he realised that impeaching the President could hurt the Republican cause. Mr Robertson himself is not above all types of "moral degeneracy". Last year, the Christian Broadcasting Network agreed to make a "substantial payment" to the Internal Revenue Service.

The taxman had conducted an investigation into improper political activities during Mr Robertson's presidential bid.

THE Reverend Pat Robertson could be described as a media pioneer, educator, philanthropist and religious broadcaster. However, this is only a small part of the unique role he plays in US culture and politics. After an unsuccessful bid to be elected as the Republican Party's presidential candidate in 1988, he carved out a niche as a political commentator from his weekly television pulpit on the 700 Club programme, where he preaches Christian fundamentalism and chastises President Clinton.

For 20 years Mr Robertson has been one of the strongest voices of ultra-conservatism in America, a position he has expanded and fortified as chairman

of the Christian Coalition, as much a business as it is a political lobby group.

Mr Robertson has a wide array of business interests, controlled and sometimes headed by family members. The Robertsons own a refinery in California and companies in Africa and China. Most recently Mr Robertson was appointed to the board of Laura Ashley in the UK as a non-executive director. He also controlled International Family Entertainment, a cable television company he founded that was sold to The News Corporation, parent company of The Times, for \$1.7 billion (£1 billion).

His personal fortune has allowed Mr Robertson to remain a fixture in US politics far

beyond the normal shelf-life of an untested campaigner. His biggest fight recently has been over the actual sins of the President.

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Bank of Scotland may also find that its link with Mr Robertson ruffles a few feathers in the UK. Mr Burt was keen to play down the religious link of the new venture, but customers may take a different view. One hitherto loyal customer, Alex Catalano, a journalist, said she would be switching her account elsewhere: "I disagree with Mr Robertson's philosophy and religion. I do not want to contribute to his profits. I have been a Bank of Scotland customer for 10 years. I do not want to be part of this particular combination of God and Mammon."

Fed end

ALAN GREENSPAN may be the world's most highly regarded central banker, but in America bets are already being placed on the identity of his most likely successor.

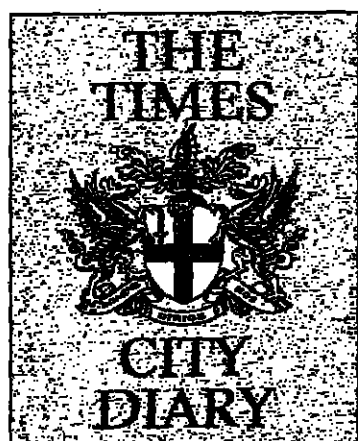
Greenspan's third term as Federal Reserve chairman runs out in June 2000, weeks before the next US Presidential elections. That battle is likely to be fought between Al Gore, the current Vice-President, and George Bush Jr, the Governor of Texas.

Both men are said to be unsympathetic towards Greenspan, who has

presided over an unprecedented period of employment growth and low inflation since 1987. Gore did not take kindly to Greenspan's conspicuous dismissal of President Clinton's proposal to plough social security funds into the stock market. Bush Jr is said to share his father's grudge against Greenspan over the 1991 mini-recession which contributed to President Bush being voted out of office.

Should Gore be elected, current administration officials like Robert Rubin, the Treasury Secretary, and Lawrence Summers, his deputy, may be front-runners. The most highly regarded internal Fed candidate is William McDonough, the New York Fed head who supervised the successful buy-out of Long Term Capital Management last year. Mr Bush Jr is said to favour Lawrence Lindsey, a former Fed governor.

SOME attitudes may be changing in South Africa, but it seems that others are proving a little more enshrined. Brian Gilbertson, chairman of Billiton, the South African mining group, gave us a cultural insight when announcing that his company had spent \$1.5 billion (£937 million) on acquisitions in six months. "Even my wife doesn't spend at that rate," Mr Gilbertson quipped in an attempt to illustrate his point.



Times table

THERE is unease in the genteel world of antiques. A tale reaches me from the Cotswolds about an estate agent who was called to appraise and sell a cottage while a fine art auctioneer sold its contents.

The cottage was valued at about £80,000 and sold for £85,000. The contents included an 18th century table with an estimated value of up to £6,000. After much viewing and deliberating by dealers it sold to the London trade for £85,000, the same price as the cottage.

The estate agency fee for the sale of the property was about £2,000. The sale of the table made a profit of £36,000 for the auctioneer.

One further thought. Until the ham-

mer fell, had the table been lost or stolen, the beneficiaries would have received only £5,000 in compensation. Yet the insurance fee they paid after the auction was £850 plus VAT, based on the £85,000 hammer price.

Sell program

KEVIN LOMAX, head anorak at Misy's, the software group, has spent several months trying to convince the City that shares in his company are worth buying. He even flew a gaggle of senior IT analysts out to the company's offices in the US last month to convince them that its Medic division - which recently announced a stunning strategic U-turn - was not in trouble.

The charm offensive worked: a note from Albert E Sharp landed on my desk yesterday morning telling me that "the US visit provided reassurance" and that Misy's was "a core sector hold".

Strange, then, that Lomax and his wife decided yesterday to sell nearly £1.3 million of shares in Misy's (leaving our Kev with a stake worth a mere £55 million). "He's buying a house in London," a friend of the multimillionaire tells me. "It has nothing to do with his confidence in the company."

No smoke...

TO GALLAHERS the tobacco company's annual financial results briefing, where City hacks nut-tutted as chairman Peter Wilson lit up mid-



Lomax said "buy", but sold

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CONSISTENTLY IT



"More champagne"

[illegible][illegible]

Equities mark time

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on the previous days close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

Company	Price	Change	Yield	P/E
ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES				
Alco	10.50	0.00	4.8	12.5
Alco	10.50	0.00	4.8	12.5
BANKS				
Bank	10.50	0.00	4.8	12.5
Bank	10.50	0.00	4.8	12.5
BREWERIES, PUBS & REST				
Brew	10.50	0.00	4.8	12.5
Brew	10.50	0.00	4.8	12.5
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS				
Indus	10.50	0.00	4.8	12.5
Indus	10.50	0.00	4.8	12.5
ELECTRICITY				
Elect	10.50	0.00	4.8	12.5
Elect	10.50	0.00	4.8	12.5
BUILDING MATERIALS				
Build	10.50	0.00	4.8	12.5
Build	10.50	0.00	4.8	12.5
ELECTRONIC & ELECT				
Elect	10.50	0.00	4.8	12.5
Elect	10.50	0.00	4.8	12.5
HOUSEHOLD GDS & TEXT				
House	10.50	0.00	4.8	12.5
House	10.50	0.00	4.8	12.5
CHEMICALS				
Chem	10.50	0.00	4.8	12.5
Chem	10.50	0.00	4.8	12.5
ENGINEERING				
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DANCE
Big-sized
premieres from
the Royal Ballet
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THE TIMES ARTS

POP
Athena shows
her class on
stage in London
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Energy to make DuBois blanch

In his poem *The Road Not Taken* Robert Frost wryly reflects on that moment when we are hit by the realisation that you can't have it all: that opportunity also means renunciation, that choice means loss. Frost died in 1963, so we can forgive his fallacy — for at that time André Previn was a mere Hollywood tunesmith.

More? He had already won four Oscars and provided the requisite aural backdrop of swooping strings to everyone from Audrey Hepburn to Lasse. But there was little inkling then that this engaging thirtysomething would turn into one of the musical world's great Protean figures: conductor laureate to the world's top orchestras; plausible jazz pianist; television personality; Sixties swinger; husband to four wives, father to nine children.

The road not taken? Rubbish, Mr Frost. Previn has taken them all — and then some. No second acts in American lives? Piffle, Mr Fitzgerald. Previn has had second, third and fourth acts — and the fat lady ain't singing yet. If anything, the tempo of his work and life is increasing from its normal "frenetic" to "blistering" as he approaches his 70th birthday next month.

Or is it his 70th? When his family fled from Berlin to California in 1938, little Andreas's birth certificate was lost. So he might still be a year short of his three score years and ten. "But frankly," he quips, "when you get to this age it doesn't really matter whether you are 69 or 70. So if it suits the London Symphony Orchestra's schedule for me to be 70 this year, fine."

Are these milestones important? "Sure, but not because of vanity. It's just that I've got a lot of things I still want to do. I don't wish to sound grandiose, but you only get one time around, so you'd better do what you know you should."

He is indeed a man in a hurry, but in the past decade he has been

André Previn's appetite for music and life seems unflagging as he celebrates his 70th birthday. He talks to Richard Morrison

rushing in an unexpected direction: into serious composition. It is as if — after the factory-farmed music-making of MGM, the mad jet-setting of his early podium career ("for 20 years I conducted in cities you can't even find on the map"), and the emotional toll of loving and leaving four wives, two of them very famous — he is now distilling life's twists and turns, sweet and sour, into big musical statements.

None has come bigger than last year's project. Previn wrote an epic operatic setting of Tennessee Williams's *A Streetcar Named Desire*, complete with rape (turbulent orchestral interlude), disorienting stage blackout, luscious arias, and some startlingly angry music. "A lot of people thought that it would be relentlessly American," Previn says. "It isn't. In fact one musical friend said: 'My God, you are a German after all.' But the big arias do tend to go back to Barber and to Britten — my biggest hero."

Perhaps because the opera's San Francisco premiere last September became the most hyped American operatic occasion since Toscanini conducted at the Met, and perhaps because of who the composer was, some critics were more than a little snuffy about this unimpeachably well-crafted piece. "I understand that; it's normal," Previn says, affecting mature indifference. But then his combative spirit rises to the bait. "I noticed that when *Streetcar* was shown on television last month, at least a dozen critics reviewed it again and more or less

said 'this is a lot better than we gave it credit for'. That made me very happy. I mean, even Renée Fleming got bad reviews at the premiere, which was insane. She was glorious as Blanche DuBois."

Either way, this *Streetcar* is destined to travel, thanks to the Previn name and his reputation for writing music that audiences (rather than critics) enjoy. He says that no fewer than seven stagings are planned across America and Europe, including a possible British premiere by Opera North. Thus encouraged, he is now working on his second opera, setting a recent Italian novella called *Silk*, by Alessandro Baricco. "It's the anti-thesis of *Streetcar*: very romantic, almost erotic, about the travels of a French silk merchant to Japan."

That's not all. Previn is also composing a big work for the Vienna Philharmonic, plus various chamber pieces. "If I am allowed by the calendar and its vagaries, I will complete them one after the other," he says, as if viewing a pile of knitting patterns. Will all this composing interfere with his other lives? Silly question. The LSO's Previn tribute next week — three concerts focused on the ripe Romantic music that he interprets so gloriously — signal his resolve to keep his public life spinning as merrily as ever. And the jamboree is bound to rekindle nostalgia for Previn's 11 years at the LSO's helm in the Seventies — a decade when,

largely thanks to his charismatic *Music Nights* on BBC TV, the orchestra became a household name.

"There's no such thing as serious music on television now," says Previn sadly. "It always has to have a gimmick. That's too bad. When I did those BBC shows — and we must have done a hundred hours or more — it became tougher to get a ticket to an LSO concert than to a hit West End show."

The indifference of television networks to serious music is not the only change that Previn, knighted in 1996, notes with regret when he returns to London. Another is the financial mess of British musical life. But surely 'twas ever thus?

"Not to the degree that it is now," he replies. "Sure, we had to change funding. We also suffered from government indifference. But it was still possible to make ends meet without sacrificing artistic goals. When I see the things that British orchestras now have to resort to, and the crazy goings-on at Covent Garden, I am so sorry. You see, when I came to live in England in the late Sixties, I thought that London was the greatest musical city in the world — and it was."

"It's still a great musical city, but no longer as important. And that's a shame, because the orchestras are still brilliant. I don't know anywhere in Europe, and certainly not in the States, where the plight of the individual musician is as bad as it is here. And yet British players are endlessly cheerful. Sure, it's black humour. But come the night of performance, they really produce the goods. They can give phenomenal performances that rank with the best anywhere. That's why I still love coming to London."

● At the Barbican (0171-638 8891) Previn gives a recital with Kiri Te Kanawa on Sunday, and conducts the LSO on March 10 and 15. His opera, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, is released by DG (459 366-2)



Previn: now embarked on writing his second opera after the premiere of *Streetcar* in San Francisco

Weir's showboat to China

The success of *A Night at the Chinese Opera* on its first performance at the Cheltenham Festival in 1987 has not been an unmixed blessing for Judith Weir. On the one hand, the opera established her reputation more or less overnight and led to big commissions and appointments; on the other hand, it set standards she has been expected at least to equal in every new work since.

So anyone who feels that nothing she has written during the past 11 years comes near to matching it, let alone excelling it, must have wondered whether *A Night at the Chinese Opera* was really all that good. Were we deluded perhaps by Richard Jones's brilliant Kent Opera produc-

CONCERTS
SCO/Previn
Glasgow

tion? Well, the best way of finding out was to go to the concert performance presented by the BBC as part of its *Beyond our Shores* festival in Glasgow last week.

The answer is that we were not deluded. It is an uncommonly inspired little opera and one of the very few British works of its kind to be animated by a true gift for comedy in musical terms. In comparison with the embarrassingly laborious efforts of even her most experienced contem-

poraries, Weir's libretto is a model of wit and her score a remarkable example of facility in word setting.

If only the Scottish Chamber Orchestra's programme had contained the text, the bemused half of the otherwise amused audience in the Royal Concert Hall would have been able to appreciate it too. This is no reflection on the singing or on the balance between instruments and voices. No one could have tried harder than this well chosen cast. Frances Lynch, as the protagonist in the Chinese opera-within-the-opera, perhaps went even too far in this respect. Michael Chance as the Military Governor got it absolutely right, as did the impressively versatile Adey Grummet.

Frances McCafferty, Adrian Thompson, Karl Daymond and Gwion Thomas.

Andrew Parrott, who conducted the original production, clearly enjoys this score. Certainly, he secured a most accomplished performance from the SCO players, who were effective not only in reflecting the affectionate parody of the Chinese-opera Act II but also in registering the discreetly exotic colouring of the first. If the last act seemed less interesting, this probably had less to do with the performance than with a score which becomes more conventional as the dramatic situation becomes more serious, falls away towards the end.

GERALD LARNER

Giving it some stick

LSO/Maazel
Barbican

IN TWO concerts with the London Symphony Orchestra in the middle of last week, Lorin Maazel demonstrated his abilities as composer, violinist and conductor. Renaissance man or showman, there is no denying his formidable talents. On Sunday night, he returned to the rostrum with more serious intent. The showmanship was not banished entirely, but these were towering, deeply impressive accounts of Schubert's *Unfinished* and Bruckner's Seventh Symphonies.

In the *Unfinished*, dynamics were calibrated with exceptional precision to build paragraphs of cumulative tension and power. Ranging from intimate whispers to climaxes of searing intensity, Maazel's handling of the first movement did justice to all the dark undercurrents, the anxieties at which this music hints. At the same time, both here and in the *Andante*, he allowed the strings of the LSO to revel in ripe sonorities: no quarter given to historical practice here. Bruckner's Seventh opens

with a propitious horn theme, gloriously arching upward. As that theme unfolded and grandiloquently expanded, Maazel nailed his colours to the mast. It was clear this was going to be no mere jog through the work. But was it too soon for such an exhilarating effect? In fact, Maazel was able to conjure a coda of similarly apocalyptic power, so the movement rested on firm pillars.

Between them were some questionable things. The second subject (marked "calm") shot off at double speed on each occurrence, except on its return in inverted form in the development, where its minor-key eloquence impeded the flow. I also felt, or imagined, a sense of manipulation as Maazel made an exaggerated *ritardando* before the onset of that awesome coda.

Inevitably, the exhibitionist in Maazel leads him to include the controversial cymbal crash and triangle roll at the climax of the Adagio (reinforced with histrionic gesturing). The choice is a legitimate one, nevertheless, and entirely apt in the context of such an interpretation. No need to cavil anyway when the nobility of this monumental movement, with its elegiac tribute to the deceased Wagner, is so magnificently realised.

A steadily paced, sinewy Scherzo followed, and then a well-paced, triumphant finale. If only Maazel could always deliver like this.

BARRY MILLINGTON

GREAT BRITISH HOPES

Rising stars in the arts firmament
RICHARD FAIRHURST

Profession: Jazz pianist

Age: 23

Beginnings: Born in Clatterbridge, near Wirral; moved to Leicester at 11.

Any albums yet? Yes, his second, *Formic*, has just been released by the innovative Babel company. His first won a prize at the Perrier Jazz Awards. He has also been named as a Steinway artist.

So none of those new-fangled synthesizers? "I'm really getting into electronics too, especially after hearing what Joe Zawinul does with them. You have to find your own way of taking jazz forward. It's not all about copying what was done in the 1960s."

Where can we hear him? His group, the Hungry Ants, appears at the Crucible, Sheffield on Friday. Later next month he'll also play solo piano in *Take the Fire* at the Lyric Studio, Hammersmith. Huw Warren's newly commissioned score accompanies Jean Cocteau's monologues, performed by Amanda Harris (and originally written for Edith Piaf).

When did he get the jazz bug? Miles Davis's album *Kind of Blue* was a formative experience. "None of my friends at school was into jazz, so I was kind of on my own."

Does he hope to conquer New York's clubs one day? He's already done a stint in Manhattan, studying at the prestigious New School. "New York has all that great history and tradition. But I prefer the European scene because it's more varied. We have a lot more influences from Africa and Asia. And there are more possibilities for exploring composed music, which is something that really appeals to me."



CLIVE DAVIS

AN EXCLUSIVE OFFER

THE TIMES

WAKING NED EXCLUSIVE PREVIEWS



Complimentary tickets • 76 venues

This week *The Times* has teamed up with 20th Century Fox to offer readers the chance to see an exclusive preview screening of *Waking Ned* on Sunday morning, March 14 (exact times will be on the ticket). The film, a raucous modern fairy tale, was a surprise hit at the Cannes Film Festival and won rave reviews when it opened in America at Christmas. Inspired by a true story, *Waking Ned* follows the comic exploits of two friends as they stumble into a lottery scam of hilarious proportions.

For a FREE ticket, which admits two, collect five differently numbered tokens, attach them to the completed voucher right and present them at the cinema box office of your choice, from those listed below. Tickets will be issued on a first-come first-served basis between March 4 and 13. *Waking Ned* opens nationwide on March 19.

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THE TIMES WAKING NED PREVIEW

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CHANGING TIMES

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NEW YORK GALLERIES: Experience of warfare changed Picasso both as a man and an artist, Richard Cork writes

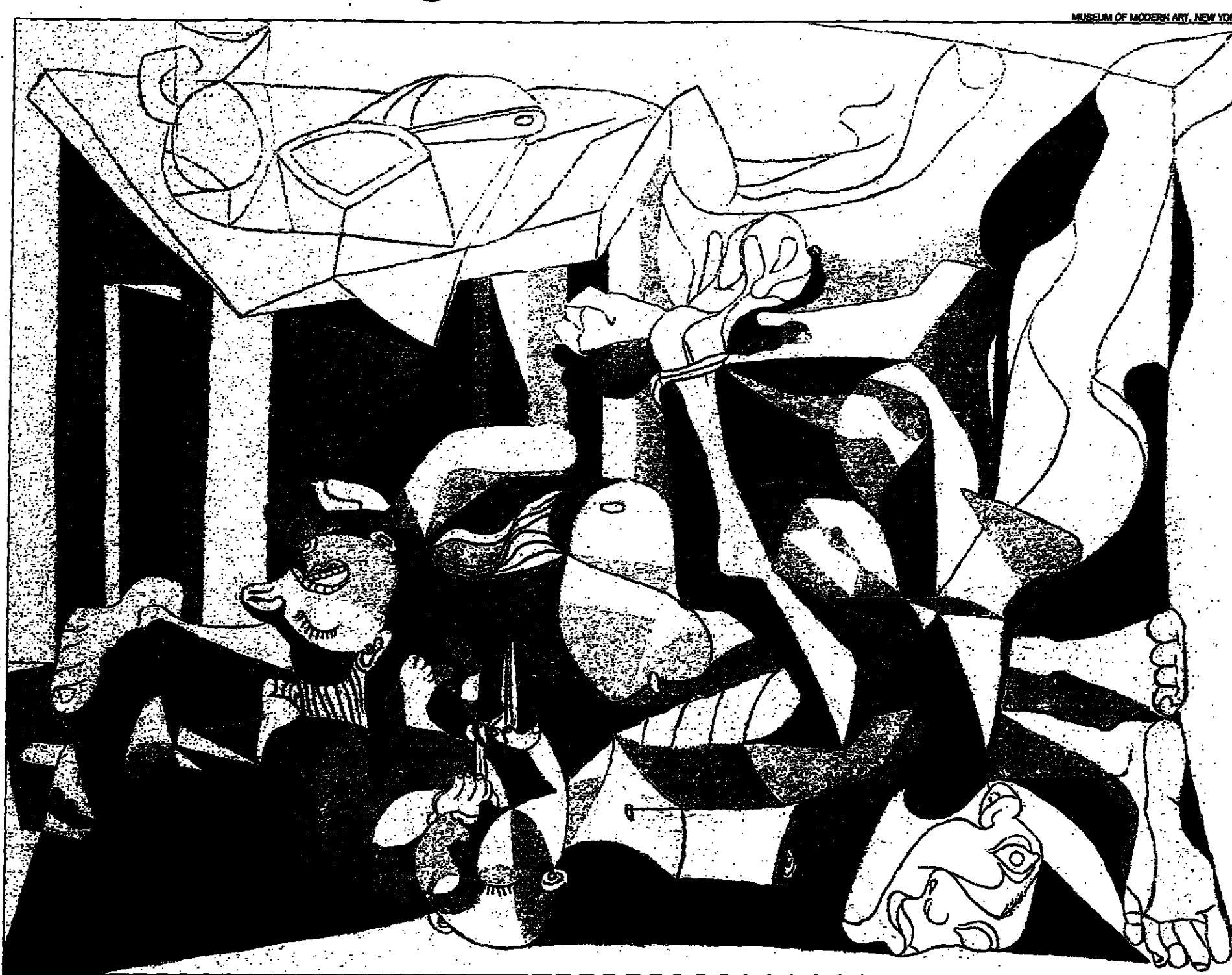
The horrors beyond Guernica

Until 1936 Picasso's art showed little overt interest in political events. Then, quite suddenly, the Spanish Civil War erupted. Picasso watched it develop with a mounting sense of revulsion. An instinctive pacifist, he was especially horrified when Franco's forces made the small Basque town of Guernica a target for saturation bombing. At that moment, in the early summer of 1937, Picasso's work underwent a convulsive change. A commission from Spain's Republic Government to produce a monumental painting for the Spanish Pavilion at a Paris exhibition pitched him into an art of protest, violence and pain. An avalanche of images concentrating on weeping women and contorted, dying animals prepared him for the execution of *Guernica* itself. Suffering, conveyed in ever more jagged and fractured forms, became his overwhelming obsession.

This is the dramatic starting-point for Picasso and the War Years. A major exhibition filling the spirals of the Guggenheim Museum in New York with a vortex of wrenching emotions. Walking up the ramps of Frank Lloyd Wright's whirling interior we find ourselves drawn into a world besieged by terrors. The completion of *Guernica* was not a catharsis that purged Picasso of the need to express anguish. Far from it, he embarked now on exploring a world that grew darker as world war approached.

His grimmest forebodings were borne out when Germany overran France with ruthless speed. Marooned on the coast near Bordeaux, he decided to abandon thoughts of escape and return to occupied Paris. The city remained his home throughout the conflict, and must often have appeared as irksome as a prison cell. Certainly, the paintings Picasso produced there exude a strong feeling of entrapment. Still life became an obsession, and he grew supremely conscious of its significance as a *memento mori*. In one gruesome canvas, painted in 1941 when Picasso was 66, a blood sausage lies coiled like an intestine on a table-top. The blade of a knife gleams expectantly amid the gloom, and the cawler jammed in a nearby drawer rises up as if in agitated anticipation of sacrificial ritual to come. The painting is drained of all colour save black, grey and white.

Austerity became the keynote of his war pictures, coupled with an emphasis on fractured harshness. A skull frequently invades these black interiors, and in one case takes the form of an ominous bronze sculpture isolated on its plinth. As for the women who so often loom out from the shadows, they look as oppressed as the inanimate objects. Picasso is ready to take appalling liberties with their features, twisting or pummelling eyes, noses and mouths until they end up



Perhaps the most openly despairing image Picasso ever produced: *The Charnel House*, from 1945, is his reaction not only to the Second World War but to the horrors of the Holocaust

with astonishing immediacy. They gaze out at us in all their breathing, emotion-filled actuality. Although obliged by Cameron to pose with as much stillness as possible for several minutes, they do not display signs of intolerable constraint. On the contrary: they seem charged by the camera's presence, their identities heightened through Cameron's probing scrutiny.

At the Metropolitan Museum of Art, a fascinating feat of reevaluation has transformed the reputation of a long-neglected Renaissance painter. In his heyday in the early 16th century Dosso Dossi enjoyed high esteem. He was dual favourite at the Court of Ferrara, and regarded by many as worthy of comparison with Leonardo, Raphael and Titian. But in later centuries the dispersal of his work meant that Dosso was overlooked.

Dosso was at his best when contributing to Duke Alfonso d'Este's showcase for Venetian art within the castle at Ferrara. Here, competing with canvases by Bellini and Titian, he painted mythological figures in landscapes with a highly individual poetic fervour.

One of the first artists to improvise freely on canvas, he becomes especially liberated in wildly handled, distant panoramas where land, sea and sky melt into a visionary, luminous haze. Few painters have conveyed a sense of wonder with as much sensuous richness as Dosso, whose finest work assures him a high place in the pantheon of Renaissance masters.

In 1917, with the war dragging on endlessly in Europe, the great French couturier Paul Poiret had an innovative business idea. He would go to New York with a portfolio of designs and license American clothing firms to manufacture his designs. Of course, the portfolio had to be alluring, and so he turned to his painter friend Raoul Dufy. Poiret and Dufy had already worked together for several years, with Dufy designing wonderfully rich and expensive fabrics hand-printed from his own wood blocks.

But this pictorial realisation of Poiret's dress designs was quite a new notion. Clearly the sympathy between the two men was extraordinary: in these lively, elegant sketches it is difficult to guess where Dufy begins and Poiret leaves off. Also, you cannot but be amazed at the presence of Poiret: there are a couple of designs that might have come

up on you. Look closely at these apparently casual pictures of two cats sleeping, of Northumbrian fishing villages, of trees and gardens. They are designed with extraordinary crispness in blocks of pale colour, making deeply satisfying patterns across the paper. For they are in fact watercolours on paper.

Hirst's surface is built up laboriously until it looks like an early Renaissance mural, faded by time and slightly chalky. He is in a class by himself.

Mercury Gallery, 26 Cork Street, W1 (0171-734 7800) until March 13

◻ SOME artists parade their rigour: Barry Hirst just stands back and lets his creep

AROUND THE LONDON GALLERIES

from one of Dior's sketchbooks while he was creating the New Look.

Neffe-Degandt, 32a St George Street, W1 (0171-493 2630) until April 30

◻ David Piddock's paintings are funny. That is the first thing to say about them. In *Death of the Avant Garde*, for instance, apparently inspired by the RA's notorious *Sensation* show, we can actually see Myra Hindley being daubed in the background, while other visitors peer and stretch and arrange their notes. All Piddock's tableaux are staged in galleries. Sometimes the characters, or their emotions, seem to escape from the art works and rampage around the building. Sometimes the opposite is the case: titanic convulsions may be happening on

JOHN RUSSELL TAYLOR

Against the run of the tide

New choreography is all about, an opportunity to take a few risks by working on the smaller scale. Between now and March 13 the Royal Ballet is fielding two simultaneous *Dance Bites* tours (sponsored by Glaxo Wellcome) which are presenting a total of five premieres. Three of them were unveiled at the Theatre Royal in Bath on Monday night.

The biggest risk-taker is Cathy Marston, who returns to *Dance Bites* for the third year in a row. She gives us *Tidelines*, a meditative ballet that wears its intellectual genesis with pride. Marston is fascinated by the attraction of opposites, by the idea that we seek in others "the elements that we lack in order to feel complete in ourselves".

As its title suggests, *Tidelines*, set to music by the Australian Peter Sculthorpe, is inspired by the ebb and flow of the tide. Marston's choreography reflects opposing dynamics — fluid and brittle, flowing and static — and the six dancers are both drawn to each other and resolutely separate.

The language is evocative of a watery landscape but seems caught up in a self-perpetuating eddy until suddenly Marston produces a staggeringly beautiful and sensually pungent pas de deux that gives the ballet an unforgettable punch line. Mara Galeazzi wraps herself around Jonathan Cope

like clingfilm, as if seeking to absorb him. The attraction of opposites here reaches its ultimate statement, as man becomes woman and woman becomes man.

Ashley Page is another choreographer who makes sexy duets, but his *Soft Underbelly*, danced to Wim Mertens's music from the film *The Belly of an Architect*, is a trio. The two men and one woman (Joshua Tullia, Hubert Essakow and Jenny Tattersall) engage in a power struggle that takes them through shared stretched-out couplings to speedy and assertive declarations of self. A standard Page work, it nonetheless satisfies in the way it gave all three dancers a PC equality.

Michael Corder has not worked with the Royal Ballet in 14 years, so his return to the company, excited much expectation. His *Masquerade*, set to Stravinsky's *Pulcinella Suite*, reveals Corder's skill as a ballet craftsman. His suite of non-narrative dances, inspired by the characters of commedia dell'arte, are artful and attractive, the most classically rigorous item on the bill.

Corder's language, both formal and frolicsome, shows why he is such an asset to a ballet company. He blends felicitous shapes for the ensemble with vivacious solo work for his three fine ballerinas — Viviana Durante, Miyako Yoshida and Leanne Benjamin.

But for all the flair and lissomness of his writing, he does not go far enough in stamping his imprimatur on the choreography. He could afford to be a little less proficient and a little more personal.

DEBRA CRAINE

Now in its fifteenth year, Adzido Pan African Dance Ensemble claims to be Europe's largest African dance company. Its brief is to embrace a variety of dance styles from across the African continent.

The troupe's newest production, *Secrets of Makaleng*, strings together dances from Ghana, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Burkina-Faso, Botswana, Zimbabwe and the Ivory Coast. Fuelled by a great sextet of drummers, the 16-strong ensemble keeps this melting pot of motion on the boil.

With pumping limbs, supple backs and frantically flexed torsos, they are like tireless revellers at some traditional-culture rave. They perform religious dances, homages to the harvest and the hunt, buoyantly aggressive warrior dances for both genders and celebrations of the marriage bond with a verve that warms the blood. Even collective grief packs a celebratory punch when dancers' hips are whirling like hula-hoops caught in the spin cycle.

Ancestral footwork

Some of their neater footwork might have filtered down from the plains of Africa into the Kitcher fields of show business. Act II opens with a courtship dance complete with tap-like shuffle-kicks — barefoot, of course — that seem an ethnic precursor of Broadway hoofing.

There are more costume changes than in a West End musical. Yet even with all the fur pelts, feathers, grass skirts and ankle beads, this is no jungle catwalk. Gathering steam, the dancers really work their flesh. At their best, they call out to us about the unbridled joy of bodies shimmying and stomping for all they are worth.

The show's downfall is structural. The programme refers to "a journey through time and space... on which we will absorb knowledge, regain lost memory and gather wisdom in order to move toward the future". Such a vaguely idealistic charting of cultural history is fine, as long as it translates into full-throttle movement. But the performance is hamstrung by some unfortunate cinematic bridging. Each dance is fronted by a naive and awkward little film, with actors in native garb spouting pretentious ancestral-speak.

But the musicians and dancers save the day. The latter's climactic parade of party pieces whips the audience into cheering frenzies of pleasure.

DONALD HUTERA

LAST 5 WEEKS - ENDS 27 MARCH

'ROBERT LINDSAY IN GLITTERING FORM'

DAILY MAIL

'ELIJAH MOSHINSKY HAS DIRECTED A DRIVING, INTELLIGENT RICHARD III'

OBSERVER

'VILLAINOUSLY FUNNY'

INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY

Richard III

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CHANGING TIMES

Court of Appeal

Law Report March 3 1999

Court of Appeal

Relevant factors in copyright costs

AEI Rediffusion Music Ltd v Phonographic Performance Ltd

Before Lord Woolf, Master of the Rolls, Lord Justice Mummery and Lord Justice Mance.

[Judgment February 19]

The Copyright Tribunal had a wide discretion in making an order for the payment of the costs of an application to settle the terms of a licence under the Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988.

Relevant factors for the tribunal to consider included an assessment of the positions taken by both parties on the application, the terms of the initial proposals and counter-proposals, the points taken by each side at the hearing and the amount of time and money spent on preparing and presenting the evidence and arguments.

Where the tribunal had concluded that both the licensing body and the user had proposed terms which were unreasonable, it had erred in awarding costs to the party it viewed as the overall winner.

The Court of Appeal so held in a reserved judgment dismissing an appeal by AEI Rediffusion Music Ltd against the decision of Mr Justice Neuberger in the Chancery Division on July 9, 1998 to overturn the decision of the Copyright Tribunal (Mr Anthony Watson, QC, chairman) [1998] EMLR 459 that the licensing body, Phonographic Performance Ltd ("PPL"), pay two thirds of AEI's costs of making applications under sections 135D and 135E of the 1988 Act, as inserted by section 175D of the Broadcasting Act 1990, to settle the terms of payment and the conditions of a licence to broadcast sound recordings pursuant to section 135C [1998] EMLR 240.

The judge ordered that there should be no order for costs on the

section 135D application and that AEI should pay PPL's costs of the section 135E application.

Mr Michael Belfort, QC and Mr Hodge Maitland, QC for AEI; Mr Jonathan James, QC for PPL.

LORD JUSTICE MUMMERY said that AEI had notified PPL of its intention to avail itself of a statutory licence to broadcast sound recordings pursuant to section 135C of the 1988 Act. It had then objected to both the operating conditions and the payment terms in the licence proposed by PPL.

It had made applications to the Copyright Tribunal under section 135D to settle the terms of payment and under section 135E to settle the conditions of the licence. The application under section 135D had not been determined by the tribunal since, subject to some minor amendments, AEI had ultimately dropped its opposition and accepted PPL's proposed terms.

The tribunal's decision could be summarised as follows: it had accepted the royalty rate proposed by PPL and rejected the rate advanced by AEI; it had rejected PPL's and accepted AEI's definition of "relevant revenue"; and it had reduced PPL's fee per site but rejected AEI's contention that there should be no such fee at all.

The chairman of the tribunal had concluded that AEI had been the winners of the application and that PPL should pay AEI's costs subject to a one-third reduction by reason of the way in which AEI had conducted their case.

The judge had said that order. On the section 135D application he had substituted an order that there should be no order as to costs. On the section 135E application he had ordered AEI to pay PPL's costs.

The judge had rejected AEI's submissions that, as an applicant

was required to make an application to the tribunal to settle the terms of payment, it was to be treated as a plaintiff and that PPL was to be treated as a defendant, as in litigation concerning a money claim.

On the basis of that analogy AEI had argued that it ought to be awarded its costs against PPL, as it had done significantly better than it would have done by accepting the terms of payment proposed by PPL. It followed that it was the overall winner and in the position equivalent to that of a successful plaintiff on a money claim in court.

The judge had been right to interfere with the exercise of the tribunal's discretion on the basis that the chairman had erred in principle by ordering costs to follow the event that AEI was to be treated as the winner and PPL as the loser of the application to the tribunal.

On an application to settle terms of payment or other conditions the tribunal had power to make such an order as it might determine to be reasonable in all the circumstances. Such a power was so different in its nature and scope from that of a court in adjudicating upon ordinary civil claims between individuals and defendants that the civil litigation analogy had to be used cautiously.

Most civil cases, if they were not settled, did result in a judicial decision on a claim or a counterclaim which could reasonably be described as an event. Costs could then be ordered to follow the event to the court to identify the winner and the loser and to make a clear cut decision on the issue of costs accordingly.

The determination of the tribunal, however, was likely in many, if not most, cases to be a compromise which was not so clear cut.

It was not like ordinary civil litigation: it was a compulsory arbitration on quantum by reference sole-

ly to the criterion of reasonableness.

The special nature and scope of the tribunal's substantive power was reflected in the width of the discretion on costs contained in section 15(1) of the 1988 Act and in regulation 48(7) of the Copyright Tribunal Rules (SI 1989 No 1129).

It was significant that the legislation and the rules did not expressly say any general principle about costs following the event such as was set out in Order 62, rule 3(3) of the Rules of the Supreme Court.

It was appreciated by the draftsman of the legislation and the rules that it was not appropriate to fetter that discretion by reference to the outcome of the application; although it was, of course, legitimate for the tribunal to give and follow the guidance contained in the Copyright Tribunal 1995 Practice Direction: see *Copings and Stone James on Copyright* (14th edition (1999) volume 2, paragraph B.11, pp412-417).

As the discretion on costs was not fettered by both parties on the application, save as stated in the Practice Direction, or provisional statutory order or, it should be interpreted and applied as a wide discretion to be exercised judicially and reasonably by taking account of, and giving due weight to, all relevant factors in a principled and proportionate fashion.

Relevant factors included an assessment of the respective positions taken by both parties on the application in the light of the outcome, both overall and on the different issues on which the tribunal had heard evidence and argument from each side: the terms of the initial proposals and the counter-proposals; the points taken by each side at the hearing; and the length of time and amount of money spent on the preparation and presentation of the evidence and ar-

guments on the issues. There would be some applications to the tribunal where it was possible to say that the licensing body was the winner. The tribunal might hold that the terms of payment and conditions proposed by the user had been unreasonable.

Equally, there would be some applications where it was possible to say that the user was the winner of the application, because the terms initially proposed by the licensing body had been unreasonable and the terms proposed by the user had been reasonable.

But where the tribunal determined that both the licensing body and the user had proposed terms ultimately held to be unreasonable, it was not correct to proceed on the basis that the outcome must produce a winner and a loser.

Looking at all the relevant matters in the round there had been a dispute between PPL and AEI on the amount to be paid under the statutory licence. Both parties had taken up positions which the tribunal had ultimately determined to be unreasonable. PPL had been asking for too much, AEI had been prepared to pay too little.

The outcome of the section 135D application, as determined on the basis of what was reasonable in the circumstances, had been somewhere between those competing proposals. No order as to costs was the appropriate order in the case of that application.

On the section 135E application AEI should pay PPL's costs, since it had ended up agreeing to almost all of the conditions proposed by PPL without a contested hearing in the tribunal.

The Master of the Rolls and Lord Justice Mance gave concurring judgments.

Solicitors: Eversheds; Green Sheikh & Co, Marylebone.

Wards Construction (Medway) Ltd v Kent County Council

Before Lord Justice Henry, Lord Justice Ward and Sir Christopher Staughton

[Judgment February 5]

Where an area was being developed, section 278(2) of the Highways Act 1980 conferred express power on the highway authority to obtain a contribution from the developers for land acquisition costs incurred by the highway authority.

The Court of Appeal so held, inter alia, allowing an appeal by the developers, Wards Construction (Medway) Ltd, from Judge Viscount Colville of Culross, QC, sitting as a High Court judge.

In 1973 Kent County Council produced an informal area action plan for the development of an area in Maidstone under which 1,750 houses would be built and the road network improved.

It was agreed between the planning authority, Maidstone Borough Council, the highway authority, Kent, and Wards that the developers should pay 65 per cent of the cost of acquiring the land and building a roundabout.

It was envisaged that the developers would acquire the land necessary for the construction of the roundabout, but that if they failed the highway authority would acquire it by the use of a compulsory purchase order. The developers and the landowner failed to agree a price and the highway authority compulsorily purchased it.

Then the cost of acquiring the land was £10,000 but long after the roundabout was built in 1991, the Lands Tribunal fixed the compensation to be paid by the highway authority to be £2,150,000.

In 1994 the Court of Appeal dismissed an appeal by the developers against that decision and the House of Lords refused leave to appeal. Whether or not the developers would have paid £10,000 they were not prepared to pay £2,150,000.

In 1994 the developers commenced proceedings against the highway authority, claiming that the agreement to pay 65 per cent of the costs of acquisition was illegal and unenforceable. In 1996 the highway authority commenced proceedings for the developers' 65 per cent share of £2,150,000.

Orders were made in both actions for the question of enforceability of the agreement between the parties to be tried as a preliminary point. The judge found that the agreement was enforceable as a matter of administrative law but unenforceable because it was performed under the law of contract.

Mr Malcolm Spence, QC, Mr Adrian Trevelyan Thomas and Mr Thomas Lowe for the developer;

Mr Gerard Ryan, QC and Mr Rodney Stewart Smith for the highway authority.

LORD JUSTICE HENRY said that the one of the issues raised on appeal was whether section 278(2) of the Highways Act 1980 conferred express power on the highway authority to obtain a contribution from the developers for land acquisition costs incurred by the highway authority.

Section 278(1) to (4) limited section 278 agreements under which developers might be required to make contributions "towards the expenses incurred by the highway authority in executing the ... works".

The question was whether those words were limited to the cost just of doing the building and engineering works; a narrow and literal construction; or whether they also included the cost of acquisition of land where that was necessary for the execution of the works.

Section 278(5) acknowledged that for certain purposes, including road improvement, the highway authority had power to acquire land by agreement or compulsorily, and obliged the highway authority to be satisfied that any such agreement would be of benefit to the public.

The basic condition for such an agreement was satisfied where the developer would "derive a special benefit" from the incorporation in the works of "particular modifications, additions or features or were executed at a particular time or place or in a particular manner".

As the overriding principle was that such an agreement should be for the benefit of the public rather than for the benefit of the developer, it seemed to his Lordship clear that it must have been Parliament's intention when developers had been specially benefited that the contributions they should make might in proper cases be based on the total cost of the works, including acquisition costs, rather than the costs of the works excluding those costs.

The words used in section 278 were ambiguous.

The choice lay between a broad and a narrow construction. On the narrow construction, his Lordship could see no sensible reason for such a provision.

Mr Ryan made the valid historical point that developers contributing to the costs of the infrastructure necessary as a result of their development was less common than after the reforms introduced by the New Roads and Street Works Act 1991 which removed restrictions previously imposed relating to the introduction of private finance into highway improvements, particularly where that private money was necessary to allow the development to proceed.

But while recognising the change of policy, only the broad

construction made sense. The broad construction in his Lordship's view reflected the clear statutory intention.

So his Lordship would conclude that section 278 did confer express authority on the highway authority to obtain a contribution from the developers for land acquisition costs incurred by the highway authority.

The next issue was whether section 278(5) of the 1980 Act prevented the highway authority from making a compulsory purchase order under section 239 of the 1980 Act.

The judge rightly recognised section 278(5) as "the primary source of the [alleged] invalidity in the relevant part of the agreement". But despite recognising its importance, it was not entirely clear whether he concluded it was a breach of subsection (5), and if so, what it was.

The highway authority submitted that he did not appear to have decided the issue, although it was fully argued.

The developers submitted that while he nowhere stated his conclusion unequivocally, it should be concluded that he did find that section 278(5) prohibited the agreement made, but that he concluded that while section 25 of the Acquisition of Land Act 1981 barred any challenge to the validity of the compulsory purchase order or the section 278 agreement, it did not bar a claim at common law based on the fact that the agreement was performed in a manner which was unlawful.

It seemed to his Lordship that the judge did find that section 25 of the 1981 Act would be a defence to any breach of section 278(5).

While it was necessary for the judge to find whether there was a breach of section 278(5), and if so what that breach was, it might be that the reason for that apparent omission lay in the way the developers had pleaded and put their case.

In his Lordship's judgment the present case required a specific finding on the issue as to whether section 278(5) had been broken, and if so, how. As no oral evidence was called on either side, credit was not an issue.

Therefore, the Court of Appeal did not start at a marked disadvantage to the trial judge. Accordingly, his Lordship would not remit for a new trial on the preliminary point but would urge the court to decide the issue.

In the circumstances, his Lordship was quite satisfied that there was a present need to acquire the land which did not depend on the existence of the section 278 agreement, that section 278(5) was not breached and did not prohibit the use of compulsory powers, and that the developers were bound by the agreement they made.

Lord Justice Ward and Sir Christopher Staughton agreed.

Solicitors: Sharpe Pritchard; Kingsley Smith & Co, Chatham.

Court has power to alter scheme of arrangement

Fletcher and Another v Royal Automobile Club

Before Mr Justice Neuberger

[Judgment February 19]

A court had jurisdiction to alter or terminate a scheme of arrangement made pursuant to section 425(2) and (3) of the Companies Act 1985 if such an order had been obtained by fraud, notwithstanding that Parliament had not provided any formal mechanism for the review of the procedure under section 425.

Mr Justice Neuberger so held in the Chancery Division on an application under Order 14A of the Rules of the Supreme Court when dismissing, for other reasons, an action brought by the plaintiffs, Geoffrey John Fletcher and Richard

O'Hea, against the Royal Automobile Club.

Mr Ian Crawford, QC and Mr Thomas Lowe for the plaintiffs; Mr Robin Potts, QC and Mr John Come for the defendants.

MR JUSTICE NEUBERGER said that the defendants had entered into an agreement with Centand Corporation whereby Centand would buy the motoring service division of the defendants and the proceeds of sale would be distributed to its members.

On June 24, 1998, the defendants applied under section 425 of the Companies Act 1985 for approval of a scheme of arrangement between itself and its members.

An order sanctioning the scheme was made on July 8, 1998.

That order was subsequently challenged by the plaintiffs on the basis that it had been obtained by fraud.

The defendants submitted that, in accordance with section 425(2) and (3), a scheme of arrangement, once approved by the relevant majority and sanctioned by the court and the relevant office copy of the order having been delivered to the Registrar of Companies for registration, the scheme had statutory effect and could not thereafter be altered or terminated otherwise than by a provision by the scheme itself or by a further scheme.

The defendants also submitted that the court order was simply one of the steps which was required before the scheme had effect; that once the court had sanctioned a scheme and the order had

been delivered to the Registrar of Companies, the scheme took effect by virtue of the provisions of the Act and not by virtue of any order of the court.

Moreover, the Companies Act did not provide for any mechanism for the formal review of the procedure under section 425.

Mr Potts relied on the dictum of Lord Hoffmann in *Kemp v Ambassador Insurance* [1998] 1 WLR 271, 276: "It is true that the sanction of the court is necessary for the scheme to become binding and that it takes effect when the order expressing the sanction is delivered to the registrar. But it is not enough to enable one to say that the court has by its order made the scheme. It is rather like saying that because royal assent is required for

an Act of Parliament, a statute is an expression of the royal will."

His Lordship said that in the absence of authority he rejected the suggestion that a court order sanctioning a scheme could not be set aside for fraud. If Parliament had intended an order under section 425 to have the special characteristics of not being able to be set aside for fraud it would have said so.

In his Lordship's view it would be a revolting absurdity if a court were not able to set aside an order made under section 425 which was not enough to enable one to say that the court has by its order made the scheme. It is rather like saying that because royal assent is required for

the consequences of setting the order could be inconvenient, or could lead to innocent third parties suffering. However, those were matters that went to the question of jurisdiction.

Solicitors: Class Law; Slaughter & May.

Human Rights Law Report

UK has duty to provide right to vote

Matthews v United Kingdom

(Application No 24833/94)

Before L. Wildhaber, President and Judges E. Palm, L. Ferrari Bravo, G. Jörundsson, C. Rozsasz, L. Caballero, J.P. Costa, W. Fuchs, M. J. J. Hedigan, W. Thomassen, M. Tsatsas-Nikolovska, T. Panfili, K. Traja and ad hoc Judge Sir John Freland.

Deputy Registrar: M. de Boer-Buquichio

[Judgment February 18]

Legislation which emanated from the European Community forms part of the legislation of Gibraltar and the United Kingdom was responsible for securing the right to free elections regardless of whether the elections were domestic or to the European Parliament.

In so determining, the European Court of Human Rights, held by 15 votes to two, that there had been a violation of the applicant's right to participate in elections to choose the legislature, as guaranteed by article 3 of Protocol No 1 to the European Convention on Human Rights.

Article 3 of Protocol No 1 to the Convention provides: "The High Contracting Parties undertake to hold free elections at reasonable intervals by secret ballot, under conditions which will ensure the free expression of the opinion of the people in the choice of the legislature."

The applicant, Ms Denise Matthews, a British citizen, was a resident of Gibraltar. She was born in 1975. In April 1994 she applied to be registered as a voter in the elections to the European Parliament.

She was told that under the terms of the EC Act on Direct Elections of 1976 Gibraltar was not included in the franchise for those elections.

The application was lodged with the European Commission of Human Rights on April 18, 1994. Having declared the application admissible, the Commission adopted a report on October 29, 1997 in which it expressed the opinion by 12 votes to five that there had been no violation of article 3 of Protocol No 1. The Commission referred the case to the Court on January 26, 1998.

Under the transitional provisions of Protocol No 11 to the Convention the case was transmitted to the Grand Chamber of the new European Court of Human Rights on the entry into force of the Protocol on November 1, 1998.

In its judgment, the European Court of Human Rights held as follows:

1. Alleged violation of article 3 of Protocol No 1

It was common ground that article 3 of Protocol No 1 applied in Gibraltar.

A Whether the United Kingdom could be held responsible under the Convention for the lack of elections to the European Parliament in Gibraltar

The Court noted that acts of the European Community as such

could not be challenged before it as the European Community was not a contracting party.

However, notwithstanding the transfer of competences to the European Community, contracting states remained responsible for ensuring that Convention rights were guaranteed.

Contracting states were responsible under the Convention and its Protocols for the consequences of international treaties entered into subsequent to the applicability of the Convention guarantees.

Moreover legislation emanating from the legislative process of the European Community affected the population of Gibraltar in the same way as legislation which entered the domestic legal order exclusively via the Gibraltar House of Assembly.

There was accordingly no reason why the United Kingdom should not be required to secure the rights set out in article 3 of Protocol No 1 in respect of European legislation.

It followed that the United Kingdom was responsible for securing the rights guaranteed by article 3 of Protocol No 1 regardless of whether the elections were purely domestic or European.

8 Whether article 3 of Protocol No 1 was applicable to elections such as the European Parliament

The Convention was a living instrument which had to be interpreted in the light of present-day conditions, a concept which was firmly rooted in the Court's case law, see, inter alia, *Loizidou v Turkey* (7th Times April 15, 1995; Series A No 310 pp26-27, paragraph 71).

The mere fact that a body had not been elected by the drafters of the Convention could not prevent the body from falling within the scope of the Convention.

To the extent that contracting states organised common constitutional or parliamentary structures under international treaties, the Court had to take those mutually agreed structural changes into account in interpreting the Convention and its Protocols.

The question remained whether acts such as the European Parliament fell outside the ambit of article 3 of Protocol No 1.

The Court recalled that the word "legislature" in article 3 of Protocol No 1 did not necessarily mean the national parliament; the word had to be interpreted in the light of the constitutional structure of the state in question.

In *Mathieu-Mohin and Clerfayt v Belgium* (March 2, 1987 Series A No 113, p23, paragraph 53) the 1980 constitutional reform had vested in the Flemish Council sufficient competence and powers to make it alongside the French Community Council and the Walloon Regional Council, a constituent part of the Belgian "legislature", in addition to the House of Representatives and the Senate; see also the Commission's decision on the application of article 3 of Protocol No 1 to regional parliaments in Austria (Application No 7008/75, decision

July 12, 1976, DR 6, p120) and in Germany (Application No 27311/95, decision September 11, 1995, DR 82-A, p158).

According to the case law of the European Court of Justice, it was an inherent aspect of EC law that such law sat alongside, and indeed had precedence over, domestic law, see, for example, *ENEL* (Case 6/64) [1964] ECR 585 and *Amministrazione delle Finanze dello Stato v Simmenthal SpA* (Case 106/77) [1978] ECR 629.

In that regard, Gibraltar was in the same position as other parts of the European Union.

The Court reiterated that article 3 of Protocol No 1 enshrined a characteristic of an effective political democracy: see *Mathieu-Mohin and Clerfayt* (at p22, paragraph 47) and *United Communist Party of Turkey and Others v Turkey* (January 30, 1998, Reports of Judgments and Decisions 1998-I, pp22-22, paragraph 45).

The Court thus considered that to accept the United Kingdom Government's contention that the sphere of activities of the European Parliament fell outside the scope of article 3 of Protocol No 1 would risk undermining one of the fundamental tools by which "effective political democracy" could be maintained.

It followed that no reason had been made out which could justify excluding the European Parliament from the ambit of the elections referred to in article 3 of Protocol No 1 on the ground that it was supranational, rather than a purely domestic, representative organ.

C Whether the European Parliament, at the relevant time, had the characteristics of a "legislature" in Gibraltar

In determining whether the European Parliament fell to be considered as the "legislature", or part of it, in Gibraltar for the purposes of article 3 of Protocol No 1, the Court had to bear in mind the sui generis nature of the European Community, which did not follow in every respect the pattern common in many states of a more or less strict division of powers between the executive and the legislature.

Rather, the legislative process in the EC involved the participation of the European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission.

The Court also had to ensure that "effective political democracy" was properly served in the territories to which the Convention applied, and in that context, it had to have regard not solely to the strictly legislative powers which a body had, but also to that body's role in the overall legislative process.

The Court then examined the powers of the European Parliament in the context of the European Community and concluded that the Parliament was sufficiently involved both in the specific legislative processes leading to the passage of legislation under articles 189 and 189a of the EC Treaty, and in the general democratic supervision of the activities of the Eu-

ropean Community to constitute part of the "legislature" of Gibraltar for the purposes of article 3 of Protocol No 1.

Article 56 of the Convention (formerly article 63) provided a state with the possibility to "extend to all or any of the territories for whose international relations it is responsible" Convention rights (paragraph 1).

The provisions of the Convention "shall be applied in such territories with due regard, however, to local requirements" (paragraph 3).

The Court recalled that in *Tyrrer v United Kingdom* (April 25, 1978 Series A No 26, pp18-19, paragraph 38) it found that before the former article 63 could apply, there would have to be "positive and conclusive proof of a requirement".

Local requirements, if they referred to the specific legal status of a territory, had to be of a compelling nature if they were to justify the application of article 56 of the Convention.

In the present case, the Government did not contend that the status of Gibraltar was such as to give rise to "local requirements" which could limit the application of the Convention, and the Court found no indication that there were any such requirements.

E Whether the absence of elections to the European Parliament in Gibraltar in 1994 was compatible with article 3 of Protocol No 1

The Court emphasised that the choice of the electoral system by which the free expression of the opinion of the people in the choice of the legislature was ensured was a matter in which states enjoyed a wide margin of appreciation.

However, in the case before it the applicant had been denied any opportunity to express her opinion in the choice of members of the European Parliament, despite the fact that, as the Court had found, legislation that emanated from the European Community formed part of the legislation in Gibraltar and the applicant was directly affected by it.

The very essence of the applicant's right to vote to choose the legislature, as guaranteed under article 3 of Protocol No 1, had been denied.

It followed that there had been a violation of that provision. Judges Sir John Freland and Jungwiert dissented.

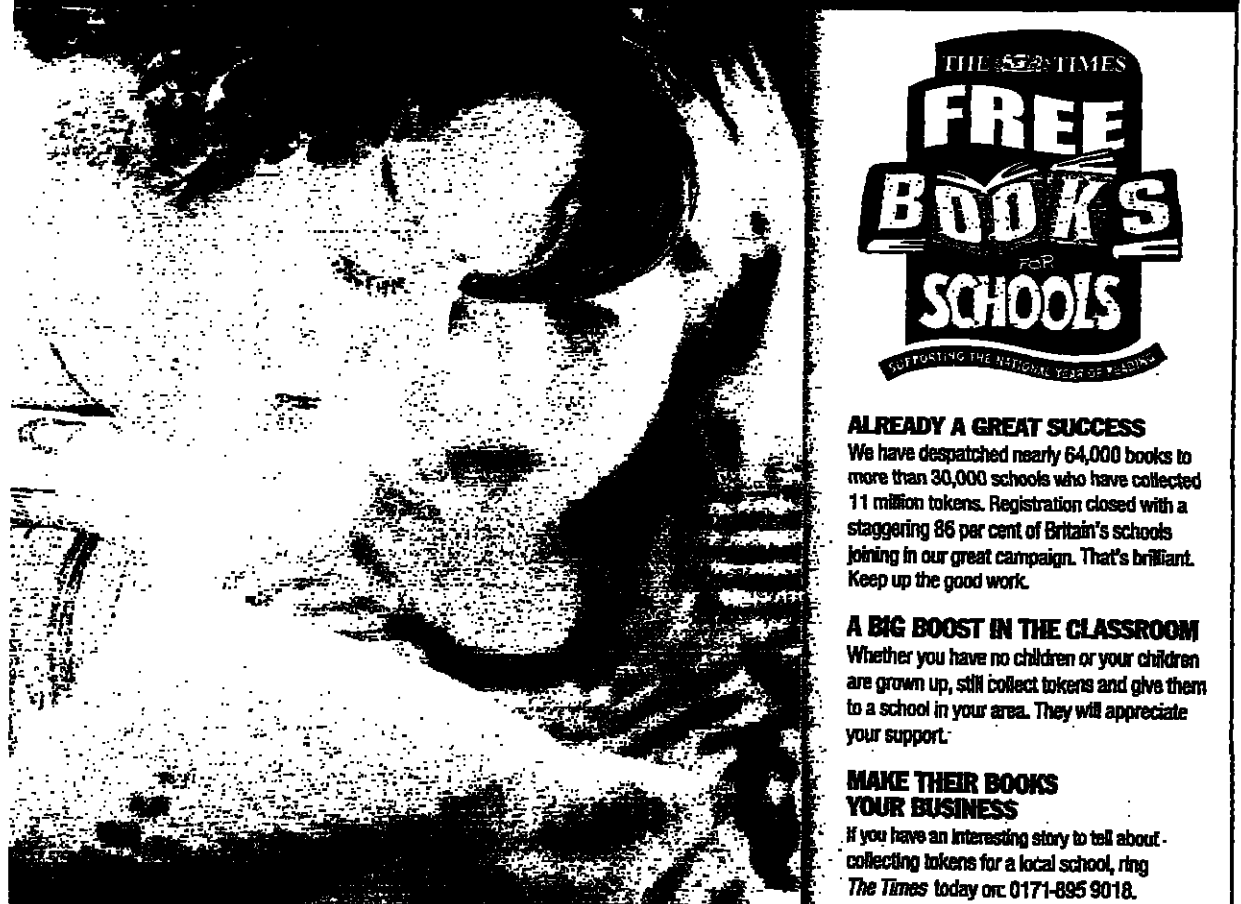
11 Other matters

The Court was of the unanimous view that it was not necessary to consider the complaints under article 14 of the Convention (prohibition of discrimination) in conjunction with article 3 of Protocol No 1, and awarded the applicant £45,000 by way of fees and expenses from which were to be deducted £7,185.90 paid by way of legal aid for fees and travel and subsistence expenses before the Court in Strasbourg.

FREE BOOKS FOR SCHOOLS CAMPAIGN THE TIMES

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Children need more books



THE TIMES



Rocketing charges: Dr Neville Young and his wife Mary, whose rent on their Kensington flat, left, has been increased by more than 250 per cent. "Existence is miserable now," he says

Switched on by power

A couple plan to turn a sub-station into their home, reports Ben Wakeham

AN AMATEUR builder has sold his £120,000 house to move into an electricity substation. Richard Curtis has plans under way to convert a disused powerhouse into his dream home.

He and his wife Anne hit upon the idea while out walking in their village of Cleadon in Sunderland when they saw the shabby station.

They fell in love with it immediately and managed to talk planners and electricity bosses into parting with the £30,000 building. The electricity box, packed with transformers supplying 11,000 volts of power to the village, will be turned into a stylish four-bedroomed palace.

"We are very excited about the plans," Mr Curtis says. "We had to move house because of my wife's job changes, but we couldn't believe our luck when we saw the sub-station. It was perfect. I'm a bit of an amateur builder and my wife is an artist and we've always had a dream of designing our own home."

He said that the plans drawn up by Charles Greenall, an architect, had been designed to enhance the character and create a calming environment. "People thought it was crazy at first because the idea of a powerhouse strikes up some weird images, but once they saw it and saw our plans for the place they thought it was great."

"Once we had convinced the council and agreed to have another smaller distributor box on the site of our home, it was in the bag. It was due to be demolished, so we were just in time and the electricity company was pleased that we saved it forking out for the demolition fees."

PLANS include a tall dining room with balcony that will lead to a spiral staircase to the roof, screened with glass. Planners have compared the conversion to the work of the late Frank Lloyd Wright, one of the world's most renowned architects.

If everything goes to plan the couple and their three children should move in by the summer, but Mrs Curtis admits that the rest of the family took some convincing.

"The children thought we had lost it, a mid-life crisis or something, and they were all leaving for home," she says, "but when they saw the ultra-modern design and swish interior, and of course their bedrooms, they changed their minds. We are all very excited now and really cannot wait to move in. I'm sure that it is everyone's dream to create their own home."

When rents skyrocket...

Rachel Kelly meets the tenants faced with huge increases despite new controls imposed by the Housing Minister

Ever since the Government introduced new limits on fair rent increases last month to help private tenants who have been facing exceptionally high rises, landlords have been cursing.

Coeff Cutting, from the Small Landlords Association, describes the move as "the very worst of the worst of old Labour", and an entirely unwarranted government intervention in the private rented sector.

From now on, increases will be limited to the retail price index plus 7.5 per cent when rent officers and rent assessment committees decide on a new rent as leases become due. Thereafter, future rises will be the retail price index plus 5 per cent.

You might assume that this was good news for tenants. These controls should restore some of the protection that tenants enjoyed from the vagaries of the open market. But many argue that they have already been subject to such intolerable rent rises that the reforms are too little, too late.

Neville and Mary Young live at the top of Allen House in Kensington, West London, and are typical of the people who enjoyed a protected tenancy. Dr Young was a GP for 30 years and has lived in Kensington all his life.

"This is an absolute disaster," he says. "The legislation is not retrospective. The point is that most landlords have already introduced such monstrous rises

that many of the 250,000 statutory tenants will be made homeless."

The legislation was introduced on February 1, but first mooted in July last year. Landlords had a crucial six-month window in which to increase rents before controls came into effect.

Karen Buck, the Labour MP for Regent's Park and Kensington North, described the legislation as a wonderful present," says Dr Young. "In fact, it is more like a kick in the teeth."

Protected tenants were the result of rent controls brought in after the First World War for fear of landlords becoming bogeymen. What was to stop landlords from charging overly high rents by exploiting the scarcity of property? Controls were stepped up in the Fifties and successive Rent Acts followed in the Sixties and Seventies.

Such tenants cannot be moved out of their properties during their lifetime thanks to "security of tenure", assuming that they continue to pay the rent and their rents are set by rent officers. These are government employees who decide the level of a so-called "fair rent" by calculating the market rent, which is then adjusted to take into account the availability of local property to rent (or what is known as scarcity). Rents have soared

since the 1988 Housing Act, undoubtedly creating hardship. The Act created assured shorthold tenancies under which a landlord could eject a tenant after six months. The expansion in the market that has followed has given rent officers much more evidence of what rents are actually being charged.

Landlords could compare the rents that they were now getting on the open market, flushed by the end of regulation. Naturally, they started to apply for rent increases, arguing that there was no longer any scarcity, so fair rents should be effectively the same as market rents.

For the Youngs, such rents have been huge. Before the legislation was introduced by Hilary Armstrong, the Housing Minister, his landlord, Gander Holdings, asked for an increase of more than 250 per cent.

There is nothing that the legislation can do to protect them from such rises, which may well make them homeless. The Youngs are waiting for a decision from the fair rent officer on what the rent should be.

Should he decide in favour of the landlord, the Youngs' rent will rocket from £2,100 a quarter to £7,500 a quarter. Two years ago, the rent went up 160 per

cent. A spokesman for Gander Holdings said: "The rent increase is in line with market rents."

"This is my family home," says Dr Young. "My mother moved in here 56 years ago, and I've been here ever since. The landlord offered us a two-bedroom flat in Bristol, but we don't want to live there. All our friends and family are here. This is our home. Existence is miserable now, and the worry of the rent is very isolating. But this is not just our problem. The retired are being crucified in this respect."

The tenants most affected are in London and the South East, especially in Kensington and Chelsea with its plethora of mansion blocks, and those on the Cadogan Estate near Sloane Square.

Neville Bines, who lives in Earsby Street in Hammersmith, used to pay £4,700 annually to his landlord, Worship House Estates. They applied to increase the rent to £31,000, the rent officer assessed it at £7,500 a year but the landlord objected. The assessment committee then put the rent at £8,250, a 75 per cent increase, in December. The new rules are too late for him.

"My wife and I are in our late seven-

ties, early eighties. We lived on a fixed income... I have written to the Housing Minister but have not had a reply. In the meantime, I have applied for housing benefit. I do not know what the answer will be but I fear the worst," he says.

The rules are also too late for Elena Brevington, from Evelyn Gardens in South Kensington. She wrote to the *Times* about her plight. "As a result of the delay in the rent-capping legislation of the Government, my landlord, the Grainger Trust, and its subsidiary, N&D Limited, has had two years to put in an application for a 300 per cent rent increase on this flat, from £6,400 a year to £19,000 a year."

The tenants argue that the Housing Minister should take into consideration the repercussions on those who have seen their rents increase by far more than 25 per cent at the last review. One solution is that the period between reviews be longer than two years, thus diluting the worst of the rises.

Even landlords' representatives admit that some tenants, who have counted on paying far lower rents, will suffer hardship. Leo Hickish, from Strutt & Parker, representing landlords, says: "While this level of hardship is regrettable, we believe that the cost of relieving it should not be borne by private individuals. It is a social cost and as such is the responsibility of government."

Is the Housing Minister listening?

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DOCKLANDS

Richard Evans sees how the worst scenarios would be handled at the Festival

Cheltenham covers all eventualities

IT IS the scenario that no one wants to think about. A horse collapses and dies in the winner's enclosure at the Cheltenham Festival or, even worse, a loose runner somewhere manages to jump onto a members' lawn packed with thousands of spectators. What happens then?

Edward Gillespie, managing director at the headquarters of jump racing, is paid to think the unthinkable and yesterday, for the first time, Cheltenham staged a dress rehearsal for some of the most dreaded sights involving horses any racecourse could face.

With rain all but obscuring the upper reaches of Cleeve Hill, a team of vet, horse ambulance, racecourse staff and officials, led by Philip Arkwright, clerk of the course, spent two hours working out how they would cope.

On each of the Festival's three days around 120 horses will negotiate an ever changing combination of the 24 fences or 15 flights of hurdles which are dotted around the 50-acre course. An accident involving one or more of those runners could happen anywhere.

With Arkwright directing operations via radio from the top of the grandstand, John Codner, the senior vet at Cheltenham, and Sebastian Garner, who provides two horse ambulances for the Festival, reach the scene. Groundstaff erect green canvas screens to enable the vet to work away from the public gaze. The biggest problems come from the driving rain and wind, which all but blows over the screens.



Cheltenham's clerk of the course, Philip Arkwright, right, discusses casualty management with senior vet John Codner

The second scenario is in front of the stands which will hold 50,000 on Gold Cup day. A race has just finished and the runners are returning along the horse-walk when one collapses — near the special platform used by racegoers in wheelchairs. "It is a pig of a situation," Arkwright says.

For the purpose of the exercise, it is assumed that the horse has died. How does the horse ambulance get close to the body and load it on board without spectators in the upper levels of the grandstand seeing the heart-breaking scene? And what about the other horses whose route back to

the unsaddling enclosure has been blocked? The radios crackle back and forth until solutions are agreed. "With that horror over, they move back 100 yards and are told that a horse has fallen — and died — at the last flight of hurdles in the home straight on the first circuit of the Stayers' Hurdle. The radio crackles again as the imaginary race continues. "Yet to Knacker. Don't forget, you have to wait for the next circuit." The by-now drenched team make their way to the winners' enclosure where a horse has collapsed and died...

There was not a spectator in sight yesterday, but as those dreaded screens made yet another appearance one could only imagine the desperation felt by a Festival crowd and a luckless owner whose tears of joy would suddenly be transformed into tears of grief. Hopefully, this will prove to be a dress rehearsal without a first night.

Today's cards at Cheltenham and Wetherby are both subject to morning inspections after heavy rainfall yesterday. Wetherby will inspect at 7.30am with Cheltenham following suit 15 minutes later. Rodger Farrar, clerk of the course at Cheltenham, said: "We have called the inspection following continuous heavy rain. By mid-afternoon a further half an inch had fallen to add to the one inch which fell over the weekend."

sight yesterday, but as those dreaded screens made yet another appearance one could only imagine the desperation felt by a Festival crowd and a luckless owner whose tears of joy would suddenly be transformed into tears of grief. Hopefully, this will prove to be a dress rehearsal without a first night.

Gillespie explained: "We call it casualty management with the focus on the horses. We are doing this to ensure we are wholly confident about dealing with the normal, and as confident as possible of dealing with the abnormal. "It is the first time we have had a rehearsal like this, but there is nothing better than doing these things on the ground so that people can think things through and learn to cope with the unexpected. In the past we have rehearsed emergency evacuations and dealing with difficult situations with the crowd. It is only sensible to rehearse something that involves the most unpredictable element — the racehorse."

RESULTS FROM YESTERDAY'S THREE MEETINGS

Catterick

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Wimbledon struggle to revive season

By Russell Kempson

WIMBLEDON are renowned for being at their most dangerous when wounded, but, surprisingly, they have responded in lukewarm fashion since the Worthington Cup semi-final defeat against Tottenham Hotspur two weeks ago. Tame draws against Aston Villa and Everton have made a mockery of their "up and at 'em" reputation.

Joe Kinnear, the Wimbledon manager, will point to a catalogue of injuries that have torn the heart from his squad, but the club's season could peter out into mid-table obscurity unless he sparks his players into action.

Tonight, Wimbledon play Sheffield Wednesday at Hillsborough, not the easiest of games in which to signal a revival in fortunes. Wimbledon are without a victory in their past nine league and cup matches, while Wednesday have won four of their past five outings in the FA Carling Premiership, scoring 13 goals.

"All the lads were disappointed after losing to Tottenham," Neil Sullivan, the Wimbledon goalkeeper, said yesterday. "But we've got over it now and we still feel we have a good chance of qualifying for Europe. There's no way we're going to give up."

It will need a Herculean effort from Wimbledon, who lie two points above Wednesday, for them to qualify for the Uefa Cup next season via a high finish in the Premiership, but they are already contemplating an alternative route. Kinnear recently made encouraging noises about entering the Intertoto Cup, the close-season competition for Europe's nearly men.

"It has been mentioned," Sullivan said. "I gather it starts in late July, which could affect our summer holidays, but if that's what it takes for us to get into Europe, then that's what we've got to do."

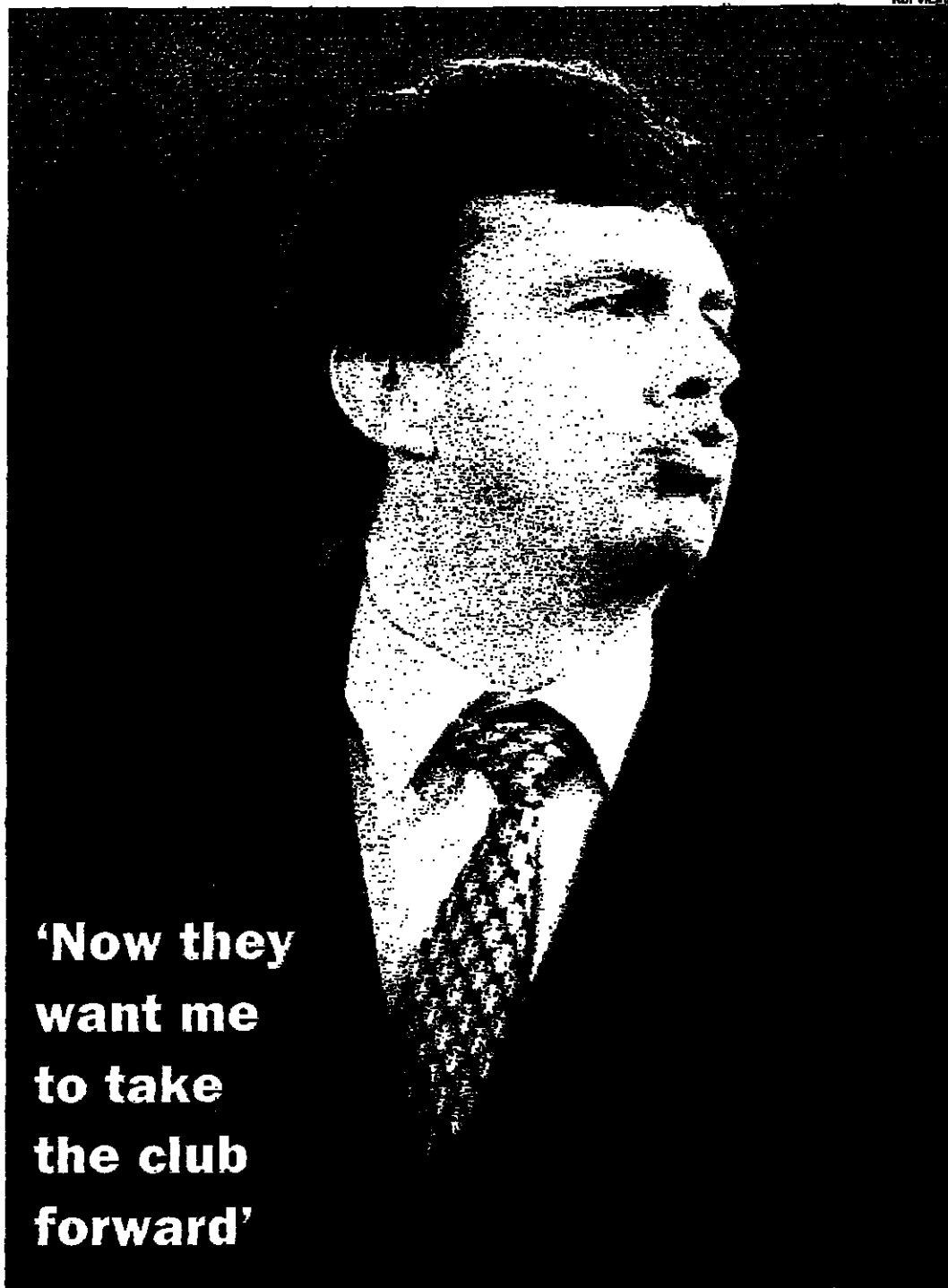
In the Nationwide League first division, Barnsley attempt to concentrate their minds ahead of their FA Cup quarter-final against Tottenham when they take on Bradford City at Oakfield this evening. Bradford have lost only one of their past 13 league matches.

Queens Park Rangers, without a win in nine games, meet Oxford United at Loftus Road in an encounter that could alleviate either club's fears of relegation.

Swindon Town play Tranmere Rovers at the County Ground in a fixture that has little link with either promotion or relegation. Tranmere have built a sequence of three wins and three draws.

Richard Hobson on a rewarding time for a bright young manager

O'Leary leads by example



'Now they want me to take the club forward'

O'Leary has made a big impact at Elland Road after succeeding George Graham in October

If the Leeds United directors harboured reservations when they appointed David O'Leary to succeed George Graham as manager, they are in no doubt now that they chose the right man. Such is his confidence in O'Leary now that, little more than four months on, they have offered the former Ireland international a five-year contract.

O'Leary has told Peter Ridsdale, the chairman, that he will agree to the deal and is waiting for the company that owns the club to approve the terms. With Leeds lying fourth in the FA Carling Premiership after a 2-1 win against Leicester City at Filbert Street on Monday night, O'Leary is entitled to reflect on a start in management that must have surpassed his expectations.

Two years remain on the existing contract that he re-negotiated when he stepped up from assistant to Graham last October and the fresh commitment will tie him to Elland Road until 2004. Even while acting as caretaker manager during the period when Martin O'Neill tormented himself over whether to walk out on Leicester and meet Ridsdale, O'Leary gave clear indications of the direction in which he wanted to take Leeds given the opportunity.

After Jonathan Woodgate and Stephen McPhail, Alan Smith, the 18-year-old striker, has become the latest starlet to shine, while Harry Kewell, left back in the FA Youth Cup-winning team two years ago, has overcome an uncertain start to the season to flourish in a new role behind the strikers.

Not since Ryan Giggs beat a path into the first team at Manchester United that the likes of Beckham and the Nevilles followed has such a talented group of young players emerged together with such brio. "I think the chairman feels I can take the club forward," O'Leary said. "I hope at the end of the five years, we can be genuine contenders for the title. At the moment, we are not quite that, although I believe we are getting closer all the time."

"When I accepted the job, Mr Ridsdale told me I had done very well under George. He had confidence in me, but said I needed to prove I was capable of being a manager. The club wanted to see what I could do and whether Leeds United was in safe hands. Now they want me to take the club and the youngsters on for the next five years and I am delighted."

"I did not have any doubt about it. Then when he said he wanted me to stay for longer I just asked: 'How long?' He came up with the five-year period, not me. 'People have said that a successful manager needs to learn his trade in the lower leagues, but I do not necessarily agree. I have always been in the top flight of English football and that has been a great education. I learnt a lot from George, but there are certain things I do differently. This is my team now because I am the manager and this is the way we play.'

"I have had this problem for three months and the worrying thing is that it is not getting any better," Heskey said. "I rest it up and come back into games, but then it goes again and I just couldn't continue on Monday for the second half."

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On present form, Leeds must be fancied to remain above Aston Villa, whose confidence has drained as their position in the table has deteriorated. The main concern for O'Leary is the way that injuries have bitten into the squad with Hiden, Molenaar and Kelly all long-term absentees and David Barry beginning a comeback only recently.

However, any signings will be for the long term rather than a quick fix. He said: "I need to add quality in some positions and I hope I get the backing from the

PREMIERSHIP TABLE										
Club	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	Goal Diff	Top Scorer	Goalkeepers
Man Utd	28	16	9	3	60	29	57	+31	Scoones	Shilton
Chelsea	27	14	11	2	41	22	53	+19	Straker	Seaman
Arsenal	27	11	11	5	35	21	44	+14	Straker	Seaman
Leeds	27	12	9	6	41	28	45	+13	Heskey	Shilton
Aston Villa	27	12	8	7	38	31	44	+7	Heskey	Shilton
West Ham	27	11	7	9	38	30	40	+8	Heskey	Shilton
Liverpool	27	11	6	10	50	34	39	+16	Heskey	Shilton
Derby	27	9	11	7	28	26	38	+2	Heskey	Shilton
Wimbledon	28	9	10	9	36	37	37	-1	Heskey	Shilton
Sheff Wed	28	10	5	11	34	25	35	+9	Heskey	Shilton
Newcastle	27	9	8	10	30	32	35	-2	Heskey	Shilton
Tottenham	27	7	12	8	30	32	33	-2	Heskey	Shilton
Leicester	28	7	9	12	34	39	33	-5	Heskey	Shilton
Blackburn	27	7	12	8	30	32	33	-2	Heskey	Shilton
Everton	27	6	10	11	20	29	28	-9	Heskey	Shilton
Charlton	27	6	9	12	31	37	27	-6	Heskey	Shilton
Coventry	27	7	6	14	31	38	27	-7	Heskey	Shilton
Blackburn	27	6	8	13	27	38	26	-11	Heskey	Shilton
Southampton	26	6	5	15	26	50	23	-24	Heskey	Shilton
Nottingham	27	3	8	16	26	54	17	-28	Heskey	Shilton

Goldberg's dream approaches sad end

By John Goodbody

CRYSTAL PALACE the Nationwide League first division club, is expected to go into administration today. The directors are expected to accept the inevitable at a board meeting at Selhurst Park. Mark Goldberg, the chairman, faces the prospect of paying the £500,000 wages owing to the staff and players out of his own pocket. No one was prepared to comment officially at the club yesterday, but an announcement is expected after the board meeting.

If administrators are called in, it will be a sorry end to what began as a flamboyant adventure last summer. Goldberg, the archetypal boyhood supporter turned club director, had become a millionaire largely by running a successful recruitment agency in Kent. He decided to buy Crystal Palace for £2.5 million from Ron Noades, the long-established chairman, who had built up the club. Noades has retained ownership of the ground and also the training centre, although he is now the owner of Brentford.

Goldberg's first move last July was to persuade Terry Venables to join him at the club where the former England coach first made his name as manager. Venables' salary was believed to be more than £1 million a year.

However, within two months, both Noades and Venables said that Goldberg had over-reached himself financially. Noades said of the takeover: "It was a stupid deal for him to do." Venables said: "I believe that buying the club has stretched him more than he thought it would."

In November, Noades issued a writ against the alleged non-repayment of a £1.5 million loan and, by January, Venables was admitting that he had agreed to take over at Selhurst Park because he believed he would have ample money for players. This had not materialised. Instead, Palace were forced to sell Matt Jansen, their outstanding striker, to Blackburn Rovers for £4.5 million in January. The same month, Venables stood down as head coach, being retained as a part-time consultant. Coppell took over as manager for the third time in his career.

Yesterday Coppell was trying to maintain a cheerful air as he took the club to play Sheffield United. He said: "I am a director of the club, but I don't know the ins and outs of the situation. However, I do know that tomorrow is a very important day."

FA charges warring pair

By Our Sports Staff

GRAEME LE SAUX and Robbie Fowler have both been charged with misconduct by the Football Association after their confrontation during Chelsea's 2-1 victory over Liverpool at Stamford Bridge on Saturday.

Le Saux, the Chelsea full back, appeared to elbow Fowler after being taunted by the Liverpool striker. The FA made its decision after studying video evidence and the pair have 14 days to appeal.

The FA has accepted Paolo Di Canio's explanation for not attending a meeting with Graham Bevan, its compliance officer, yesterday. Bevan was due to meet the Italian striker to discuss his recent outburst over Paul Alcock, the referee, but Di Canio has instead gone home to visit a sick relative. The meeting has been rescheduled for next week.

Di Canio said last week that Alcock had not allowed him to "clear matters up" after his 11-game suspension for pushing

By Our Sports Staff

ing over Alcock while playing for Sheffield Wednesday against Arsenal in September. The Marco Branca saga took another twist last night when Middlesbrough contradicted reports that their Italian striker had been given the go-ahead to resume his career.



Di Canio: missed meeting

Branca, 34, suffered a serious knee injury last April and, after an abortive comeback earlier this season, the club's medical specialist, Andrew Webber, recommended that Branca should retire.

The player's demands for a second opinion were finally accepted by Middlesbrough and after consulting David Dandy, a knee specialist, the club said on Monday that Branca would rejoin his teammates for training yesterday.

However, that was countered in a statement from the club last night. The statement read: "Branca's optimism is jumping the gun somewhat as a club spokesman says that the draft report from Mr Dandy indicates he is in agreement with the earlier consultant who believed that Branca's knee is not up to the stresses and strains of professional football. It seems that Mr Dandy has not given the green light Branca hoped he would receive."

RUGBY LEAGUE

Sharks may just be out of their depth

DESPITE recent heavy rain, the opening JJB Super League game between Wigan Warriors and Hull Sharks on Friday is not yet in doubt (Christopher Irvine writes).

However, with the river that is adjacent to Central Park having bursts its banks and the pitch drains blocked, a muddy spectacle is hardly the ideal advertisement for the start of a fourth "summer" season.

Wigan are due to move to their new 25,000-capacity stadium at Robin Park in September in time for the top-five play-offs, which this season have been slightly amended to reward teams finishing higher by giving them extra recovery time between the qualifying matches and semi-finals.

Though even favourites to retain their title, Wigan will be relying far more than last season on a crop of talented youngsters, including Mike Smith, 17, a promising hooker, who is expected to make his debut on Friday.

At the launch of the 1999 season yesterday, Maurice Lindsay, the Super League Europe managing director, said: "There have been seasons when it has been a question of who will come second to Wigan, but the greater competition from the likes of Leeds and Bradford mean that is no longer the case."

TOMORROW
Club-by-club guide to the 1999 JJB Super League

Darren Turner, the Sheffield Eagles forward, has been fined £1,000, with £500 suspended for 12 months, and severely reprimanded by the Rugby Football League for making a gesture to the crowd after he was sent to the sin-bin during a Salford Challenge Cup tie at Salford Reds last month. He is already serving a six-match ban for a dangerous tackle in the same match.

SPORT IN BRIEF

CRICKET: Curtly Ambrose and Courtney Walsh, who were both injured during the tour of South Africa, are fit again and have been named in the West Indies squad for the first Test with Australia, which starts on Friday at Queen's Park Oval, Port of Spain. Carl Hooper could not be considered because he is with his family in Australia.

BOXING: Paul Jones, of Sheffield, has said that the brawl at the Oldham Leisure Centre on Saturday, in which a man died, has convinced him to give up boxing. Jones, who lost his Commonwealth middleweight championship to Jason Matthews after being disqualified for holding, 32, said: "If this is what comes with boxing, I'm out. I'll never fight again."

BOWLS: Tina Burgess, from Wellingborough, won the Champion of Champions' singles title at the 1st Cent. Centre, Exeter, yesterday when she beat Helen Wall, from Church Gresley, 21-16 in the final. Wall, who reached the semi-finals of the national under-31 championship last year, led 14-0 after 16 ends, but dropped 11 shots over the next seven.

SAILING: Prada Challenge, of Italy, had the best of a brisk day of racing on Auckland's Waitemata Harbour yesterday to lead after the first of four round-robins in the 1999 Road to America's Cup regatta. The Italian crew, skippered by Francesco de Angelis, finished on two points, with the French Le Delfi crew, skippered by Bertrand Pace, on one point.

BADMINTON: Joanne Goode has been seeded twice at the centenary Yonex All-England championships at the National Indoor Arena in Birmingham next week. Goode and Simon Archer are seeded to reach the last eight of the mixed doubles, while Goode and Donna Kellogg are also seeded to reach the quarter-finals of the women's doubles.

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

By Robert Sheehan, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

Here is another deal featuring Paul Soloway:

Dealer South		Love all		Teams	
♠ K 8 6 3		♠ 7 4 2		♠ 7 4 2	
♥ A K 5 3		♥ J 10 8 6		♥ J 10 8 6	
♦ K 5 4 3		♦ 7 6		♦ 7 6	
♣ 3		♣ Q 8 7 4		♣ Q 8 7 4	

S	W	N	E
1 C	W	3 C	E
3 NT	All Pass	Pass	Pass

Contract: Three No-Trumps by South. Lead: three of hearts.

This classic declarer-play problem arose in a Vanderbilt knock-out teams match. Both teams involved reached Three No-Trumps, which should be defeated easily enough.

Soloway's team-mate led a top heart and shifted to a spade, which beat the contract easily enough - declarer could not make more than three spades, two diamonds and three clubs.

Soloway received a low heart lead at trick one and won East's ten with his queen. The auction had been very revealing, suggesting as it did that not only were hearts 4-4, but also that the spade finesse would be right. The winning play has a pleasing elegance.

At trick two Soloway cashed one top club and then played the queen of diamonds. If West wins his only possible chance is to play the king of spades, but you can now come to nine tricks via

four spades, one heart, one diamond and three clubs. It is much better for him to duck.

Next Soloway played the jack of clubs and it was East's turn to have no winning solution. Again, if he wins this and plays a spade to the king and ace, you have your nine tricks (four spades, one heart, two diamonds and two clubs). If instead they cash their hearts and exit in another suit, you cash the ace of clubs and take the spade finesse. That allows you three tricks in the majors, two diamonds and four clubs.

So East has to duck the jack of clubs. Now, with five tricks in the minors to go with one heart, Soloway simply played ace and another spade, establishing three tricks there for his contract.

Robert Sheehan writes on bridge Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

GALAX
a. A solar system
b. An Australian braggart
c. An evergreen

BELLUM
a. A boat
b. Third stomach of cow
c. A beautiful thing

DATO
a. A date-picker
b. A landowner
c. A boyfriend

GALIGNANI
a. A thornproof tweed
b. An aperitif
c. A paper

Answers on page 38

KEENE on CHESS

By Raymond Keene, CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Kasparov leads

At half-time in the Linares super-tournament where each player has met every opponent once, Garry Kasparov leads by a full point. Remarkably, all three of his wins have come with the normally disadvantageous black pieces. The cross-table at the foot of this column gives the complete scores at the halfway stage.

White: Veselin Topalov
Black: Garry Kasparov
Linares 1999

Sicilian Defence	
1 e4	c5
2 Nf3	d5
3 d4	cxd4
4 Nxd4	Nf6
5 Nc3	a6
6 Bg5	b5
7 Bx6	b4
8 Bc2	Nb7
9 Qd2	O-O
10 O-O	Bb7
11 h4	Qc7
12 Ne4	Qd5
13 B3	Nc5
14 a3	Nb4
15 Bb4	Qc7
16 Bg4	Nd7
17 e5	Nb6
18 f4	Nc4
19 a5	Qe7
20 Qc3	dxc4
21 Bxc4	Bb1
22 Bc2	Be7
23 Rd1	Qd7
24 Qd3	O-O
25 Qc3	Qc6
26 Nc6	Rd7
27 Nc7	Rc7
28 Nc7	Rc7

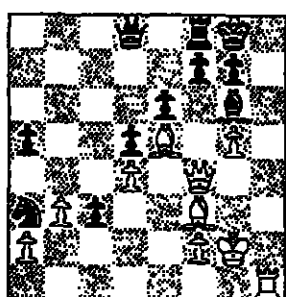
LINARES 1999								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8 Pts
1 Kasparov	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1/2	1	1	5
2 Kramnik	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1/2	1	4
3 Anand	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1	4
4 Adams	0	0	1/2	1	1/2	1	1	3 1/2
5 Svidler	1/2	1/2	0	1/2	1	1/2	0	3
6 Leko	1/2	1/2	0	0	1	1/2	1	3
7 Topalov	0	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	3
8 Ivanchuk	0	1/2	0	1	0	1	1/2	2 1/2

In the above table, 1 represents a win, 1/2 a draw and 0 a loss

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene

White to play. This position is from the game Braghetta - Grosar, Bratto 1998. How did White create a bottleneck in the black position which led to a quick win for him?



Solution on page 38

So you want to be a Hollywood player?

When Mel Brooks suggested that anybody can direct a movie, but that there are only 11 good writers, he probably couldn't have guessed just how many people ache to be the twelfth. In last night's *Close Up: LA Stories* (BBC2) — a beguiling documentary about Brits who have packed their laptops for Hollywood, hoping to make it as screenwriters — James Nutt and Roder Parsons reminded us that 45,000 film scripts are registered every year in Hollywood.

Working on the relevant actualities of multiple films registered to films half-written, there must be at least four million screenwriters out there who have got past the opening page. "Exterior," New York. Jack snubs out his cigarette and hails a cab. And a further 487 million people who believe they could write a screenplay if only they could wangle a week off work to polish one off.

But fewer than 200 movies get made each year in Hollywood, too many of them starring Demi Moore. Considering that watching made is less fun than writing, it goes to show you how difficult screenwriting must be. Not that you can rely on the judgment of a Hollywood studio executive to have chosen the best ones in his autobiography, *Ways Of Escape*, Graham Greene recalled how Sam Zimbalist asked him if he could spruce up the most recent rewrite of the final part of the screenplay for *Ben Hur*, because the studio felt there was "a kind of anticlimax after the Crucifixion".

Even now, on a film set, the writer ranks lower than the caterer. You had only to watch how Miles Millar, one of the 20,000 Brits in Los Angeles, had to struggle to get in to the Hollywood premiere of *Lethal Weapon* 4. Millar, who works with an

American writing partner, got a story credit for *Lethal Weapon* 4. While Mel Gibson and George Clooney pranced down the red carpet into the foyer, Millar was negotiating with the lady checking tickets at the tradesman's entrance. Maybe he was trying to impress his girlfriend, who had flown in from London to share in his triumph, but it was a mistake to tell the check-in lady that he was one of the movie's writers. The poor woman had to fight to suppress her snorts of pity. She'd have sniggered if he'd gone up and said, "Hi, I'm Miles, and I have piles the size of pomegranates."

And Millar's one of the successes. He sold his first script, straight out of film school, for a \$1million. He's reached the stage where a studio executive will meet him for a cranberry juice by a hotel swimming pool, listen to his film pitch, screw



Joe Joseph

his eyes into the middle distance as if imagining it on screen, and then ask the key cinematic poser: "If we bought this Tuesday, how soon would it take you to write it?"

Yet trying to stake a claim in this goldrush town — where the surest way to make money, to judge by the shopfronts, is to set up a photocopy shop Xeroxing everyone's scripts — is like trying to find the London plane. Tina's deter-

mined to write "Nine Lives", a movie about a man who turns into a cat. Think this sounds kooky? Well, Sacha Gervasi, a British graduate of UCLA's screenwriting class, has co-written a comedy about a gay Scottish hairdresser who comes to LA to compete in the world hairdressing championships. And Gervasi's script is BEING FILMED by Warner Bros. Gervasi's script created a buzz, which spawned a bidding war. Buzz sells. "This is a town that really knows only hot or cold," one agent explains, "not good or bad."

For all its health warnings — you'd make sure money buying scratchcards than as a screenwriter — this was an affectionate, uncynical documentary, evidently made by people who are themselves bewitched by the glamour, myths and mystique of Hollywood. Who isn't? Californian sun, shine pours through windows; writers' bedrooms look on to sun-

ny swimming pools; sleazy downtown Hollywood appears here like a place you might actually be willing to walk through at night without an SAS bodyguard. *LA Stories* is likely to be as intoxicating as a narcotic to those who already itch to see their name in lights, even if they know in their hearts that the only thing Steven Spielberg is ever likely to say to them is, "I'll have a Big Mac, large fries, with a chocolate shake, to go".

Hope to bring Hollywood pizzazz to personal finance. BBC2 last night launched *Your Money or Your Life*, starring Alvin Hall. This New Yorker represents television's latest attempt to find a personal finance presenter who doesn't look like an accountant. Channel 4 scored a big hit with Mrs Cohen — Dr Ruth who talked about Texas instead of testosterone. Hall is a poor man's Samuel L.

Jackson. He campily cajoles spend-thrifts into dumping their mobiles and cutting up their credit cards, and says things like "black pants are black pants no matter how many you have". Natalie had five. Alvin told her two would do. But this is pretty rich coming from a man who owns 48 coats, like being given beauty tips by Boris Karloff. Another new series, *House Proud* (BBC2), shows us people who decide to build their own homes. Someone should tell them about estate agents. Building your own house in Britain is like prospecting for oil in your back garden when there's a petrol station down the road. It's painful enough keeping an eye on builders when they are in your own house. Watching builders mess up the houses of complete strangers is as exciting as combing a child's head for lice. Unless *Schadenfreude* is your thing, in which case you'll probably find *House Proud* fascinating.

REVIEW

Joe Joseph

- BBC1**
- 6.00am Business Breakfast (67406)
 - 7.00am BBC Breakfast News (1) (36203)
 - 9.00am Killy (1) (281883)
 - 9.45 The Vanessa Show (1) (719845)
 - 10.55 News: Weather (1) (340069)
 - 11.00am Change That (341008)
 - 11.25am Don't Cook, Won't Cook (1) (3408045)
 - 11.55 News: Weather (1) (336893)
 - 12.00pm Call My Bluff (1) (81884)
 - 12.30pm Wipeout (453424)
 - 12.55 The Weather Show (1) (5307241)
 - 1.00pm One O'Clock News (1) (33300)
 - 1.30pm News: Weather (1) (5907116)
 - 1.40pm Neighbours: Lance struggles to repay his debts (1) (35047574)
 - 2.05pm Ironside: The Chief opens a seven-year-old murder case (1) (568319)
 - 2.55pm Through the Keyhole (1) (4566834)
 - 3.25pm Children's BBC: Playdays (6804116)
 - 3.45pm Little Monsters (5468715)
 - 3.50pm Chucklevision (482261)
 - 4.10pm See It, Say It (5834070)
 - 4.35pm The Wild House (348319)
 - 5.00pm Newsround (4143845)
 - 5.10pm Blue Peter (9830932)
 - 5.35pm Neighbours (1) (358339)
 - 6.00pm Six O'Clock News: Weather (1) (83)
 - 6.30pm Regional News Magazine (35)
 - 7.00pm Holiday on a Shoestring: Craig Doyle visits Corfu and Michael McNally travels to Disneyland Paris (1) (4932)
 - 7.30pm Tomorrow's World: A pioneering device to prevent brain damage in babies, and a new technique to extend the shelf-life of fresh produce (1) (19)

- BBC2**
- 7.00am Children's BBC Breakfast Show: Pingu (787984) 7.05 Teletubbies (3188244) 7.30 Snorks (873177) 7.50 The Really Wild Show (3849043) 8.15 Revlon (3280319) 8.30 The Muppet Show (5437338) 8.40 Pingu (1474970) 9.00 Images (7003086) 9.10 What? Where? When? Why? (7083222) 9.25 The Art (4741512) 9.45 Words and Pictures (811222) 10.00 Teletubbies (34357) 10.30 Numbers (984793) 10.45 Cats' Eyes (9652951) 11.00 News: Scotland (3680796) 11.20 Geography Programme (3537796) 11.40 Science in Action (891877) 12.00pm Revista (5533338) 12.15pm Hallo aus Berlin (4453680) 12.30pm Waking Lunch (95860) 1.00pm Brum (8304116)
 - 1.10pm The House Detectives: A terraced house in Dorset (1) (41135512)
 - 1.40pm Hart-Davis on History: Grantham in Lincolnshire (3506807)
 - 2.10pm Awash with Colour (56828116)
 - 2.40pm News: Weather (1) (3672406)
 - 2.45pm Westminster (1) (5347593)
 - 3.50pm News: Weather (1) (6524593)
 - 3.55pm Kaye (9657883)
 - 4.25pm Ready, Steady, Cook (1) (6543628)
 - 4.55pm Esther (1) (5628608)
 - 5.30pm Today's the Day (1) (12)
 - 6.00pm Star Trek: The Next Generation: A woman is chosen by her people to serve as a peace offering (1) (549599)
 - 6.45pm Buffy the Vampire Slayer: Buffy meets a ventriloquist's dummy she suspects is stealing organs from performers in a talent show (1) (358086)
 - 7.30pm Sophie Grigson's Herbs: The uses of parsley (1) (61)
 - 8.00pm University Challenge: Balfour v Birkbeck, with Jeremy Paxman (1) (1222)
 - 8.30pm Looking Good: The fashion forecaster Martin Raymond explains the merits of tailor-made suits (1) (947)
 - 9.00pm Living Room: The making and selling of the suburban development Kings Hill (1) (89512)

- ITV**
- 5.30am ITN Morning News (10086)
 - 6.00pm GMTV (5115241)
 - 9.00pm News: Weather (1) (3347970)
 - 10.30pm This Morning (1) (44969864)
 - 12.15pm ITN News (1) (4457406)
 - 12.30pm ITN Lunchtime News (1) (95636)
 - 1.00pm WEST: Next Stop Richard Wyatt, Polly Lloyd and correspondents review local news from the South (64086)
 - 1.00pm WALEs: Sturminster Marj is remembered (64086)
 - 1.30pm Home and Away: Tom becomes the hero of the hour (1) (33715)
 - 2.00pm The Jerry Springer Show: Outrageous and uninhibited US talk show (1) (5744832)
 - 2.45pm Wheel of Fortune (1) (410357)
 - 3.15pm ITN News Headlines (1) (410574)
 - 3.20pm ITN News (1) (4120715)
 - 3.25pm CTV: Moparts: Shop (1) (10336) 3.35pm Teddybears (1) (81851) 3.45pm Jurner (9831845) 4.10pm Whizzkid (516574) 4.40pm Mad for It (2416122)
 - 5.10pm A Country Practice: Tom is taken hostage (702069)
 - 5.40pm ITN Early Evening News: Weather (1) (56628)
 - 5.50pm MTV Crimestoppers (603777)
 - 6.00pm Home and Away: Tom becomes the hero of the hour (1) (33715)
 - 6.25pm WALEs: Wales Tonight: Weather (1) (628135)
 - 6.25pm WEST: ITV Weather (20583)
 - 6.30pm WEST: The West Tonight (1) (13)
 - 7.00pm Emmerdale: Viv takes decisive action over Donna (1) (9828)
 - 7.30pm The Big Match — Live! Manchester United v Inter Milan (kick-off 7.45pm). Coverage of the first leg of the long-awaited European Cup quarter-final tie from Old Trafford, with commentary by Clive Tyldesley (1) (95756932)
 - 9.45pm Coronation Street: Alison reports Kevin missing (1) (300154)
 - 10.15pm News at Ten: Weather (1) (382135)
 - 10.45pm ITN News and Weather (1) (132951)

- CENTRAL**
- As HTV West except: 12.15-12.30pm Central News (7695574)
 - 1.00pm Echo Point (64086)
 - 1.30pm The Jerry Springer Show (6189883)
 - 2.15-2.45pm Home and Away (411086)
 - 3.20-3.25pm Central News: Weather (1) (20715)
 - 5.10-5.40pm Shortland Street (702609)
 - 6.25-7.00pm Central News: Weather (828135)
 - 10.45-10.55pm Central News: Weather (132951)
 - 1.00-2.35pm FILM: The Super (118433)
 - 4.20pm Central Jobfinder '99 (3898278)
 - 5.20-5.30pm Asian Eye (3742758)

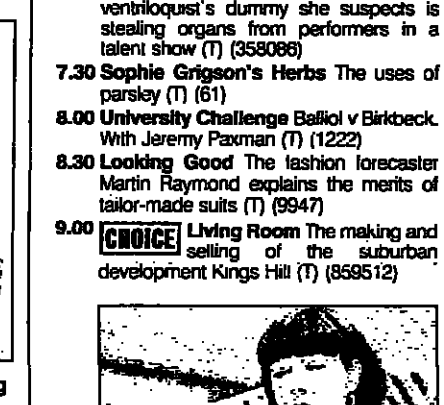
- CHANNEL 4**
- 6.00am Sesame Street (50116)
 - 7.00pm The Big Breakfast (52241)
 - 9.00pm School: Science for Today (94338)
 - 9.30pm Rai-A-Tat-Tat (1) (8119135) 9.45pm Book Box (1) (8107390) 10.00pm Stage Two Science (1) (821628) 10.15pm All About Us (980491) 10.30pm French Programme: Channel Hopping (1968574) 10.50pm Stop, Look, Listen (1) (8238845) 11.00pm First Edition (1) (352048) 11.15pm Tackling Technology (1) (3541999)
 - 11.30pm Powerhouse (1) (4154)
 - 12.00pm Sesame Street (1) (74574)
 - 12.30pm Bewitched (1) (32086)
 - 1.30pm Pet Rescue (1) (62628)
 - 1.30pm The Three Stooges: The trio leave the Army (1) (3761511)
 - 1.50pm Lessee of Life (1954): A country vicar struggles to come to terms with the fact that he has only one year left to live. Starring Robert Donat and Kay Walsh. Directed by Charles Frenn (1) (7568135)
 - 3.30pm Collectors' Lot (1) (38)
 - 4.00pm Fifteen-to-One (1) (16)
 - 4.30pm Countdown (1) (3405086)
 - 4.55pm Ricki Lake: Provocative dressers receive makeover (1) (551377)
 - 5.30pm Pet Rescue: Two puppies are treated for shyness (1) (82)
 - 6.00pm Late Lunch with Mel and Sue: TV chef Gary Rhodes joins the bubbly hostesses for a chat and a bite to eat (1) (7777)
 - 7.00pm Channel 4 News: Weather (1) (242086)
 - 7.55pm The 1999 Clifton Private Bank Photography Prize: The work of the Portuguese photographer Augusto Alves Da Silva (1) (140338)
 - 8.00pm Brookside: Ryan offers Jason an olive branch (1) (6390)
 - 8.30pm Doors: Set off for a weekend city break — but although their destination is the same, each has a unique personal itinerary. In the first programme, a trio of travellers experience very different sort of breaks in New York. Presented by Danny O'Brien (1) (51525)
 - 9.00pm ER: A Halloween party at the medical student dorm ends in disaster (1) (515)
 - 10.00pm Sex and the City: Carrie suspects that Mr Big is ashamed of her (1) (75203)

- CHANNEL 5**
- 6.00am 5 News and Sport With Becky Anderson (1703406)
 - 7.00pm WorldPart: Part nine. The problem of bullying in schools (1) (6386899)
 - 7.30pm Milkshake! (2811425)
 - 7.35pm WorldPart: House (1), 5 News Update (4880154)
 - 8.00pm Havalizoo (1) (2013777)
 - 8.30pm Dappledawn Farm (1), 5 News Update (2012048)
 - 9.00pm Hot Property (1) (7) (6880195)
 - 9.25pm Russell Grant's Postcards (1) (4672796)
 - 9.30pm The Oprah Winfrey Show (7130375)
 - 10.20pm Sunset Beach: Amy fantasises about Sean (1) (3899338)
 - 11.10pm Leesa (369767)
 - 12.00pm 5 News at Noon (1) (2016864)
 - 12.30pm Family Affairs: Claire apologises for the car crash (1) (1494086)
 - 1.00pm The Bold and the Beautiful: Sheila sees James and Maggie dancing (9388970)
 - 1.30pm The Roseanne Show: The outspoken comedian chats to the boxer Oscar De La Hoya (1), 5 News Update (1453357)
 - 2.00pm 100 Per Cent Gold (9372086)
 - 2.30pm Good Afternoon Daily: Entertainment, featuring word game Cryptogram, real-life soap Liverpool Mums and satirical quiz Setting the Family Silver: 5 News Update (1970574)
 - 3.30pm Indict and Convict (TVM 1974): William Shatner stars as a lawyer who defends himself against a charge of murdering his wife and her lovers. With Ed Flanders. Directed by Boris Sagal (4895311)
 - 5.20pm Sunset Beach: Summer earlier (1), 5 News Update (3943864)
 - 6.00pm 100 Per Cent Computer-generated quiz (2818057)
 - 6.30pm Family Affairs: Declan flirts with Siobhan (1) (2607319)
 - 7.05pm News: Weather Round-up of the day's stories (1) (543574)
 - 7.30pm Nick's Quest: Vampire bats attract Nick Baker to the tropical forests of Belize, where the bloodthirsty creatures exist in great numbers (3/8) (1) (2696203)
 - 8.00pm Switched at Birth (TVM 1991): Fact-based drama about two Florida babies, inadvertently swapped in a hospital maternity unit and raised for ten years by the wrong biological parents. Bonnie Bedelia, John Jackson, Judith Hoag, Brian Kerwin and Ed Asner star. Directed by Lois Smith (1), 5 News Update (8737438)
 - 10.10pm Rumble (1) (1988): Sylvester Stallone heads for Russia to rescue a friend from prison. Action thriller, with Richard Crenna. Directed by Peter MacDonald (7859880)
 - 12.00pm Melinda's Big Night In: With guest Neil McCandless (7913278)
 - 12.40pm UK Raw: A group of transvestites visit Asot (3/10) (4688810)
 - 1.10pm Live: NHL, Ice Hockey: Richard Orlund and Todd MacInnis introduce full coverage of the Central Division clash between St. Louis Blues and the Chicago Blackhawks (6472052)
 - 4.40pm The Movie Chart Show: News and reviews (1) (9245929)
 - 5.05pm Move On Up (1) (3219181)
 - 5.30pm 100 Per Cent (1) (8904833)



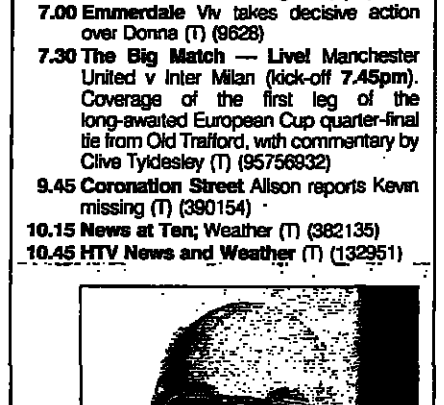
Carol Smilie takes the redecorating spin across the Channel (8pm)

- CHOICE**
- 8.00pm Changing Rooms: Two French farmhouse interiors are renovated (1) (3680)
 - 8.30pm Comic Relief: Jukebox Vintage clips of Harry Enfield and Chums, and a chance for viewers to vote for their favourite comedy duo (4/6) (1) (33241)
 - 8.50pm The National Lottery: Greatest Hits. New entertainment show, replacing the lottery's best moments (1) (252932)
 - 9.00pm Nine O'Clock News: Regional News. Weather (1) (7721)
 - 9.25pm National Lottery Update (769086)
 - 9.30pm Jasper Carrott: Back to the Front. Stand-up comedy (2/8) (1) (29512)
 - 10.00pm The X Files: Mulder finds his life in jeopardy when he goes undercover to capture a terrorist (1) (40390)
 - 10.50pm Ruby Wax Meets: Betty Midler and Liza Minnelli Ruby chats to the Hollywood megastars (1) (3354)
 - 11.20pm Snappers: The controversial fashion designer Andrew Grouves (1) (249715)
 - 11.50pm As Good As Dead (1995): Premiere. A woman trades identities with her best friend so that she can use her medical insurance, but doesn't count on the consequences (1) (544512)
 - 11.50pm News: Weather (1) (544512)
 - 1.10pm Weather (1) (544512)
 - 1.15pm BBC News (1) (544512)



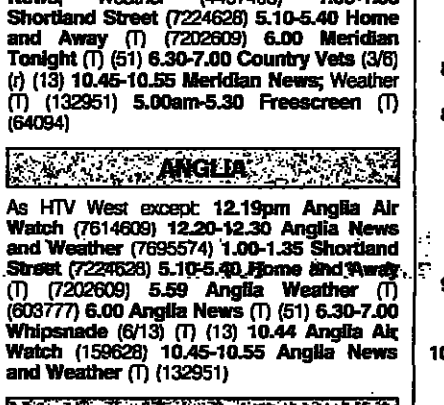
A film following Vogue magazine's launch in Russia (9.50pm)

- CHOICE**
- 9.50pm Trouble at the Top: Report on the multimillion-pound launch of Vogue in post-communist Russia (1) (603795)
 - 10.30pm Newsnight: With Jeremy Paxman (1), Video Nation Shots (710845)
 - 11.15pm CRUISE: A Living Hell. New series exploring clinical depression. With Professor Lewis Wolpert (851203)
 - 11.55pm Weather (1) (161690)
 - 12.00pm Despatch Box (82075)
 - 12.30pm BBC Learning Zone: Open University. The Chemistry of Creation 1.00 The Chemistry of the Invisible 1.30 The Chemistry of Creativity 2.00 Schools. Dance 4.00 Languages 5.00 Business and Training 6.45 Open University: Is Seeing Believing? 6.10 Organisms and Origins 6.35 Enzymes



Murray Walker's Top Ten. The veteran commentator introduces his grand prize heroes (1) (857715)

- CHOICE**
- 10.55pm Murray Walker's Top Ten. The veteran commentator introduces his grand prize heroes (1) (857715)
 - 11.55pm The Big Match Tonight's European Cup highlights (1) (801883)
 - 1.00pm Off Beat (1986): A librarian is persuaded to replace his car friend in a song-and-dance spectacular, and commences the charade to woo a fellow performer. Starring Harvey Keitel. Directed by Michael Dinner (116433)
 - 2.35pm The Big Match Highlights of Real Madrid v Dynamo Kiev (562334)
 - 4.20pm The Making of James and the Giant Peach: The film of Roald Dahl's children's book (7381147)
 - 4.50pm ITN Nightscreen: Behind the scenes of ITN programmes (43267181)
 - 5.00pm Coronation Street (1) (64094)



Anglia Air Watch (7.15pm)

- ANGLIA**
- As HTV West except: 12.15pm-12.30pm Meridian News: Weather (4457406)
 - 1.00-1.35pm Shortland Street (702609)
 - 1.35-1.45pm Home and Away (411086)
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MOTOR RACING 37

Public outcry drives McLaren team into a corner

SPORT

WEDNESDAY MARCH 3 1999

ATHLETICS 38

Jackson seeks justice as he takes on the hired gunmen

United manager laughs off Italian pessimism on eve of European Cup quarter-final

Ferguson sees through smokescreen

BY OLIVER HOLT, FOOTBALL CORRESPONDENT

THE ghost of Machiavelli and the spirit of Scarpia cavorted together on stage at Manchester United's Theatre of Dreams yesterday as Alex Ferguson prepared to repel the latest threat to his dream of winning the European Cup by placing Internazionale in the pantheon of Italian villainy.

The United manager seethed with suspicion and mistrust, refusing to believe that Ronaldo had been ruled out of the first leg of the quarter-final tonight and painting the Nerazzurri as some sort of sinister "throwback" to a dark age of Italian football, when cynicism and caution reigned.

So convinced was he of the conspiratorial tendencies of the Milanese, in fact, that he gave the impression he would not be surprised to see them take the field with long daggers concealed beneath their togas and "friend of Caesar" printed in the space where the club badge should be.

Of course, the question of Ronaldo's involvement kept bobbing back to the surface. Ferguson said that he believed it would contravene Uefa regulations if he flew into England today and then played, but it emerged later that the Brazilian only has to appear at Old Trafford an hour before the kick-off to be eligible to take the field.

His reputation is such that his presence, or absence, dominates everything, but if the World Cup final last summer taught us one lesson, it is that Ronaldo is only a danger if he is fully fit. He is clearly still some way from being that, so, whether he plays or not, United have nothing to fear if they stay strong psychologically.

"I'm not convinced that Ronaldo won't play," Ferguson said. "The Italians are the innovators of the smokescreen."

When they tell me it's pasta, I still check under the sauce to make sure it is.

"They always come out with these things. The English are so strong, we are so terrible in the air, they are wonderful and we cannot do this and we cannot do that. And then they come and beat us 3-0."

"I will wait to see their team. I think they want Ronaldo to play, but it is down to him and his doctor whether he does. I hear he is coming over on a private jet with his owner, Massimo Moratti. Well, I hope Moratti's playing."

The tone of Ferguson's address, which was not without its nods, winks and smiles, had much to do with a determination to ensure that no hint of complacency contaminates his team in the wake of the reports

FA charges Le Saux.....38
O'Leary looks ahead.....38
Hard times at Palace.....38

of the troubles that have beset Inter in Serie A.

The Italians, languishing in sixth in their domestic league, have won only twice away from home all season and that against the comparative lightweights of Empoli and Udinese. They have scored only once away this year. Their home performance in the goalless draw against Juventus on Saturday night was the very antithesis of flowing football, a disjointed, uncertain affair that betrayed their lack of conviction and reliance on Ronaldo for attacking sharpness.

In comparison, United are flying high in the FA Cup Premiership, four points clear of the rest and with eight wins and two draws in their past ten league games. On form, with Andy Cole and Dwight

Yorke frightening the best defenses, they should be clear winners, but Ferguson was quick to drag his listeners out of their fool's paradise.

"Inter are a throwback to the Italian mentality of not giving anything away and man-marking with a sweeper," Ferguson said. "The AC Milan team of Rijkaard, Van Basten, Baresi and Maldini brought a freshness to Italian football in the late Eighties and a different vision by playing 4-4-2."

Juventus then took that on with a 4-3-3 system and the way they operated with Del Piero meant they had that fantastic open, aggressive type of play. But Inter are a throwback to the old *catenaccio* style of giving nothing away and hoping to catch you in a weak moment. They will stick rigidly to their jobs, particularly the marking defenders, and they will be disciplined in the centre of midfield."

"I don't pay too much attention to their form in the Italian league. They will be motivated for this game because it is their only chance of an honour. They can go for one trophy and forget everything else. It is not like England, where every team feels they have to try to win everything. Their mentality at Old Trafford will be that they are hard to beat. I will be happy with 1-0."

This time, United have the players and the experience to succeed, however canny and clever Inter might be. They are on top of their game and Yorke and Cole have proved already that they can translate their league form into goals against Europe's elite. Their ability to maintain their concentration without the slightest lapse for 90 minutes would be the key, according to Ferguson.

Inter's attack is not the same without Ronaldo, but Jaap Stam has grown steadily in stature since his arrival in England and should not be discomfited by Ivan Zamorano. The danger will come from the floating Roberto Baggio and Youri Djorkaeff. Roy Keane, as well as the United back four, will have to be on his mettle to snuff them out.

Then there is the confrontation between David Beckham and Diego Simeone, the Argentinean who admitted his contribution this week to the dismissal of Beckham during the World Cup. Ferguson paid him little heed. By then, he had had his fill of villainy.



Zamorano is greeted by the traditional Manchester welcome from the elements as Internazionale arrive in a rain-soaked England yesterday

Simeone makes himself easy target

Matt Dickinson predicts that Internazionale will attempt to disrupt United's rhythm in midfield

Ronaldo continued to prove elusive yesterday, but there was never much chance of Diego Simeone slipping into Manchester unnoticed. Not when there was a Mr Bobby figure to attack him in airport arrivals, a forerunner of the incessant scorn that he will greet his every touch at Old Trafford tonight.

The jeering of Simeone is the only certainty of an intriguing match, but those United fans who are hoping to rile the Internazionale midfielder player into blowing a gasket — as David Beckham did in the face of the Argentinean's provocation during the World Cup — are likely to be disappointed.

"Simeone is not a child," Miroslav Lucic, the Inter coach, said, "and when the public are against him, he plays three times better." The paying public will be against him as never before after his admission that he tricked the referee into dismissing Beckham during England's match

against Argentina in France last June. His talent for disruption is likely to make him less popular with every tackle in what can be expected to be a fiery midfield confrontation with Roy Keane.

An expert at the niggling foul and distracting opponents from the task in hand, Simeone's gifts appear to be perfectly suited to Inter's plan, which is to try to keep the match as cagey and lacking in fluency as possible.

Giuseppe Bergomi, their 36-year-old defender, talked yesterday of the huge boost that the Serie A side would gain from Ronaldo's return for the second leg and the obvious sub-text was that they would attempt a stifling draw tonight to set up the Brazilian for a hero's comeback in Milan.

That will not be easy against a team of United's attacking power, especially

with Simic, the Croatia defender, indelible. Inter have conceded only five goals so far in the European Cup this season, however, the best defensive record in the competition, and appear to be unfazed by the prospect of Dwight Yorke and Andy Cole in harness.

"They are good," Bergomi said, "but the best in Europe? Oh no." Inter are more preoccupied with the threat from the flanks, where Zanetti and Winter have had their problems as wing backs and can expect to be tested to the full by Giggs's pace and Beckham's whipped crosses.

That Inter are not in good shape is beyond doubt. Lying sixth in Serie A, they have won only three of nine games this year and Lucic does not even try to deny that his players "In a championship like the Italian one, played with the highest intensity of all, there are always moments of tension," he said.

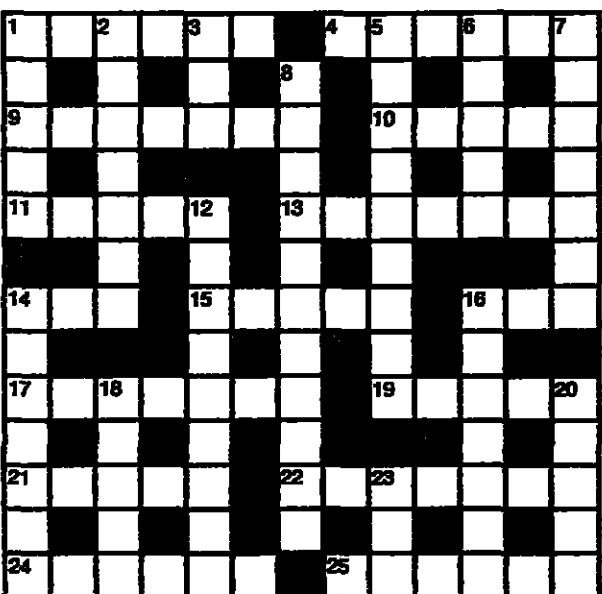
Wrangling, though, does not suddenly remove the match-winning potential of

morale as much as their attacking power.

"We all know it is different football without him," Lucic said. "In England, the game is collective, but in Italy it is more to do with the personalities of the significant players. You build teams around big players. So for us it is very important when a player like that is not there. My team will have to double their efforts."

United will be confident that even that may not prove enough. History, though, suggests otherwise.

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 1655

ACROSS

- 1 Gambling house (6)
- 4 Pictures, likenesses (6)
- 9 Gale, empty talk (7)
- 10 Damascus its capital (5)
- 11 Made smooth, tilted at angle (5)
- 13 Able to pay, one abused by glue-sniffers (7)
- 14 Drink (eg ale) (3)
- 15 Put forward (postulate) (5)
- 16 Electrically-charged atom (3)
- 17 Cooked rice dish (7)
- 19 Upright (5)
- 21 Ninth planet out (5)
- 22 To cheat, fool (7)
- 24 Flooding rain (6)
- 25 Extend, feast (6)

DOWN

- 1 Pole (for tossing) (5)
- 2 Posted (5,2); snooty (5-2)
- 3 Cricket practice (3)
- 5 White-bellied parasite (9)
- 6 Ravine; eat hugely (5)
- 7 Unlucrative (7)
- 8 Argue, fight (with) (5,6)
- 12 Two-vowel syllable (9)
- 14 Marked with bands (7)
- 16 List in detail (7)
- 18 Oar: sounds like head bone (5)
- 20 Tyre rubber depth: walk on (5)
- 23 Drinking vessel (3)

SOLUTION TO NO 1654

ACROSS: 1 Salami tactics 8 Occiput 9 Alien 10 Ban 11 Demurge 13 Averse 14 Vandal 17 Adorable 19 Mug 21 Envoi 22 Endorse 24 Put one's feet up
DOWN: 1 Show Boat 2 Licence 3 Map 4 Tatami 5 Conjugate 6 Iceing 7 Sink 11 Desertion 12 Slag heap 15 Demerit 16 Obsess 18 Divot 20 Hemp 23 Dee

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BIG MATCH LINE-UPS AND STATISTICS									
MANCHESTER UNITED					INTERNAZIONALE				
G Neville	J Stam	R Johnson	D Irwin	P Scholes	R Baggio	I Zamorano	Y Djorkaeff	A Winter	D Simeone
D Beckham	R Keane	P Scholes	R Giggs	A Cole	F Colaninno	G Bergomi	F Galante	G Pagliuca	
D Yorke									
4-4-2					3-4-2-1				
Probable teams					Referee: H Krug (Germany)				
Kick-off: 7.45pm, Television: ITV (7.30 live), Radio: Radio 5 Live									

In the past four years of European competition at Old Trafford, United have, on average, conceded a goal a game. With away goals counting double in the knockout stages, such lapses could prove costly.

	P	Goals conceded
1995-6	1	2
96-7	5	3
97-8	4	4
98-9	4	4
	14	13

RESULTS IN THIS SEASON'S GROUP MATCHES

MANCHESTER UNITED									
P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts			
6	2	4	0	20	11	10			

INTERNAZIONALE

P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
6	4	1	1	9	5	13



Simeone: niggling

Allott blocks his way past Evans

BY RICHARD HOBSON

TO DESCRIBE a cricketing duck as valuable appears to be a contradiction in terms, but in Auckland yesterday Geoff Allott could claim to have been responsible for one of the most important noughts in the game's history.

Allott, a natural No 11, who was playing for New Zealand against South Africa in the first Test, failed to score in 101 minutes at the crease and thus surpassed the stoical effort of Godfrey Evans, the England wicketkeeper, who required 97 minutes to get off the mark against Australia in Adelaide in 1947.

Whereas Evans went on to reach ten without being dismissed, Allott failed to open his account. Having acknowledged

each blocked delivery with a raised bat as he neared the record and enjoying a standing ovation when he broke it, he finally gloved a delivery from Jacques Kallis to Shaun Pollock at slip.

"Even the South Africans were laughing towards the end," Allott said. He faced 77 balls and helped Chris Harris to add 32 runs for the last wicket.

It was an innings that won valuable time for his side, who still need 265 to avoid an innings defeat with all their second-innings wickets in hand and one day to play.

"I had no idea about the record until the

public address announcer said I had gone past John Wright's New Zealand record (66 minutes) to get off the mark against Australia in 1981-82. A tailender is never afraid of getting runs — in fact, Chris turned down about five easy singles," Allott said.

The left-arm fast-medium bowler has taken more first-class wickets than he has scored runs — 86 to 83 — and his batting average fell from 2.57 to 2.25 as a result of his effort yesterday. "It was probably the best duck I will ever score," he said. Perhaps, but a record of 18 runs in 11 Test innings suggests that it may not be the last.

Scoreboard, page 37

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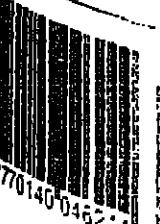
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Club was taken
half an hour before
the Premier League
against Sheffield Wednesday at Hillsborough.
Kramer was sitting
with his arms
folded, then erupted
of feeling moved. He
said he was attracted
by Wednesday's
club doctor, Royce

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